

Two civilians injured in south Lebanon shelling

RASHAYA (AP) — Two Lebanese civilians, including a 12-year-old girl, were injured Monday by shells fired from Israeli-occupied southern Lebanon, security officials said. Fatmeh Abdullah, 12, and Mohsen glass when the shells detonated near their homes in Qilia, about one kilometre outside the Israeli-occupied zone. At least eight shells struck in and around the village in the Bekaa Valley, about 20 kilometres southwest of Rashaya, Lebanese officials said. At least one house was damaged, they added, speaking on customary condition of anonymity. It was not immediately clear if the shells were fired by Israeli troops or allied militiamen of the South Lebanon Army.

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Jordan Times

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جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

China, Saudi Arabia call for strategic partnership

BEDJING (R) — Leaders from China and Saudi Arabia lauded eight years of burgeoning economic and political ties by calling for a strategic partnership between the two nations, the official Xinhua news agency said on Monday. In a joint press communique marking the Oct. 14 to 21 visit of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah to China, both sides said they were "willing to raise cooperation to a new strategic level," Xinhua said. "The two countries are satisfied with the noticeable progress that has been scored since they forged diplomatic ties eight years ago," the Oct. 17 statement said. In addition to praising bilateral ties, the statement also touched on issues of global and regional concern, including the Middle East peace process and the ongoing dispute over United Nations weapons inspections in Iraq.

Price: Jordan 200 fils

Hopes fade for comprehensive peace deal at Mideast summit

WYE MILLS (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton on Monday sternly warned Israeli and Palestinian leaders not to abandon their attempt to reach a breakthrough at a Middle East summit but hopes faded for a comprehensive peace deal.

Clinton, speaking to reporters as he set out from the White House for a fourth day of shuttling between the parties at the secluded Wye Plantation in Maryland, said Monday's Palestinian grenade attack in Israel had complicated the work for a deal.

"The issues are difficult. The distrust is deep. The going has been tough. But the parties must consider the consequences of failure and also the benefits of progress," a grim-faced Clinton told reporters before boarding his helicopter.

At the talks, State Department spokesman James Rubin read a statement agreed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat condemning the attack and committing themselves to keep negotiating.

But Israeli spokesmen said that after the attack in the southern Israeli town of Beer-sheba, in which a Palestinian hurled two grenades into a crowded bus station wounding more than 60 people (see page 12 story), work at the summit was being limited.

"There will no other subjects discussed except the subject of security," said David Bar-Ilan, communications adviser to Netanyahu.

Although there were signs of exasperation from some Americans — one U.S. official said, "Patience is wearing real thin" — some meetings between the two sides did go ahead.

Israel's headline Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon conferred with two senior Arafat aides, Abu Alaa and Abu Mazen, and U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross met Sharon and other Israeli cabinet ministers.

Palestinian and Israeli officials said Clinton was to have a bilateral meeting with Netanyahu and Arafat later on Monday. U.S. and Jordanian officials said His Majesty King



U.S. President Bill Clinton speaks to reporters on the South Lawn of the White House on Monday in Washington, DC, before leaving for the Wye River Conference Center in Wye Mills for another round of Middle East peace talks (AFP photo)

Hussein, a key figure in Middle East peace efforts who is being treated for cancer in Minnesota, was flying to Washington to be ready to intervene if needed (see other story).

The atmosphere of relaxation which Washington tried to create at this rustic estate 110 kilometres east of Washington has done little to lessen the tensions or soften the long-held positions of the two sides, U.S. officials said.

Israeli officials as well as U.S. officials played down hopes of a comprehensive deal on outstanding issues after 19 months of stalemate that would open the way for so-called "final status" talks on an ultimate peace deal.

The key element for Israel is security — establishing Palestinian mechanisms for cracking down on militant attacks on Israelis coupled with further Israeli West Bank withdrawals.

After little progress in five days at the Wye Plantation, a

complex of conference rooms and nurseries in farmland near the Chesapeake Bay, and Monday's grenade attack, many participants believed a comprehensive deal might be out of reach.

"It doesn't like there's going to be any grand signing ceremony any time soon," one U.S. official close to the talks said privately. Washington had been hoping to conclude the summit with a White House signing ceremony.

State Department spokesman Rubin echoed the gloomy mood in a briefing. "I don't know what the ultimate outcome will be," he said. "The grenade attack certainly makes it more difficult to achieve what we wanted to achieve."

Bar-Ilan, breaking a news blackout the United States has sought to impose, told reporters: "We hope that we can still achieve agreement at this point — if not a full agreement perhaps a partial agree-

ment." But he said even this result, which Arafat says would be unacceptable, was impossible without progress on the security issue. "Unless we get some satisfactory answers from the Palestinians there won't even be that," he said.

Excluded from such a limited deal would be issues of safe passage for Palestinians between the West Bank and the Gaza, a third stage withdrawal by the Israelis from the West Bank or so-called "unilateral acts" like Israeli settlements and a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state.

"I think the Clinton administration tried its best to bring the sides together and whatever the problems that seem insurmountable now will be overcome in the future if they are not overcome here," Bar-Ilan said.

Clinton, who has invested enormous prestige in this initiative, said he was returning to

"encourage the Israelis and Palestinians to make the hard decisions necessary to move the process forward."

"Reaching a secure, just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians is the best way to ensure that terrorism has no future in the Middle East," he added.

Rubin said that although formal work had been suspended on all issues other than security, he believed informal contacts were continuing and he hoped the working groups would resume "at an appropriate time."

Negotiations from both sides have said they are willing to stay at Wye Plantation until a deal is set.

U.S. officials said Clinton would probably leave for a trip to California as planned on Tuesday and Wednesday and there was no certainty he would return to Wye Plantation on Thursday if the talks were still going on.

King arrives in Washington

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday arrived in Washington for a rest after undergoing the fourth chemotherapy session at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

Mayo Clinic medical sources said the King is responding very well to the treatment, and is showing good progress while enjoying high spirits.

U.S. State Department spokesperson James Rubin reiterated the U.S. administration's appreciation of the prominent role played by King Hussein in the peace-making process.

"King Hussein has always played a very constructive and important role in the peace process and that it is something he has done before a long time and he has been one of the players who helped us move the ball forward whenever he has been able to do so," said the U.S. official.

World news agencies said Monday evening that King Hussein might go to Wye Plantation to give impetus to the peace process.

A Jordanian diplomat was quoted by AFP as say-

ing in Washington that "with regards to Wye Plantation, it's not sure" that the King will go.

The diplomat added that King Hussein was considering his health and "many factors" in deciding whether to intervene in the peace talks that entered a fifth day on Monday with no signs of a breakthrough.

President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright have had contacts with King Hussein in recent days about the negotiations at the summit, according to U.S. officials.

Ankara issues last warning to Damascus as talks begin

Agencies

DEMANDING THAT Syria end its support of Kurdish rebels, Turkey warned Monday that talks now taking place were Syria's last chance for a peaceful solution to the crisis.

"We have tried all peaceful ways, we are now trying out the last one," President Suleyman Demirel said during a ceremony at a university in the southern province of Hatay.

"Turkey is determined not to bear this suffering any longer," "No one should test Turkey's power," Demirel warned.

Turkish and Syrian officials met Monday at a secret location to address Ankara's claims that Syria is sheltering rebels, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Turkish officials said they would require proof that Syria was closing down alleged Kurdish rebel camps in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley in Lebanon.

NTV television said that Syrian officials handed over

information during the meeting aimed at proving that Damascus does not support the rebels. It said they invited Turkey to inspect the locations where Ankara says the rebels have been living and provided a list of Kurdish rebels that have been arrested in Syria.

Demirel on Monday urged Syria "to cut all its support" for separatist Turkish Kurds, saying this was Ankara's last warning.

"All we want Syria to do is to cut its support for the terrorists, close down their camps and not to harbour their leader," Demirel said.

"We are for a peaceful solution, but this does not mean that we are weak. The Turkish state is strong enough to eliminate such problems," Demirel said in his televised remarks.

"We are trying to persuade Syria for the last time... We hope our region which already is the scene of several problems will not witness more difficulties," he added.

Tension has run high between Turkey and Syria

since last month when Ankara accused Damascus of providing Abdullah Ocalan's separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) with increasing help and harbouring him.

The row boiled up at the beginning of October when Turkey went so far as to threaten Syria with military reprisals if it failed to heed its warnings to cease all support for the separatists.

Demirel also called on several Arab states not to side with Syria in the conflict with Turkey.

"Thousands of our people have been killed by the terrorists and the victims are Muslims. If the Arab countries say 'we are in solidarity with Syria' this means they will be in solidarity with those who help the terrorists massacre Muslims," Demirel said.

Earlier on Monday, Turkish Defence Minister Ismet Sezgin accused the Syrian army of secretly sending several officers to fight against the Turkish military on the side of the PKK.

Syria's longest-serving prisoner hospitalised, Amnesty says

CAIRO (AP) — Syria's longest-serving prisoner, a Palestinian activist who was first jailed in 1966, has been hospitalised after falling unconscious during a three-week hunger strike, Amnesty International said Monday.

Abdul Majid Zaghmour, 54, was admitted to Al Muwasat hospital in Damascus last week during a hunger strike to protest his detention, the human rights group said in a statement.

Zaghmour was also suffering from internal bleeding from an untreated ulcer and an ear infection

due to unhygienic prison conditions in Adra prison outside the capital, Amnesty said.

Amnesty said the hospital offers "no specialist medical care to deal with serious ear problems," and authorities are refusing to allow him care in a specialised state health institution.

Syrian officials would not comment on the report. Amnesty called on Syrian officials to free Zaghmour and to ensure that he is "guaranteed access to any specialist medical care that he needs."

Zaghmour, a former

member of Fateh, the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organisation faction, was arrested on May 10, 1966 and charged with the murder of a Palestinian guerrilla leader.

He was sentenced to death later that year by a military court after what Amnesty called a "grossly unfair trial."

The sentence was commuted in 1989 to a prison term equal to the time that he had already spent in custody. It is unclear why he remains in prison.

Syrian jails hold hundreds of political prisoners, Amnesty has said.

Qadhafi in surprise visit to Tunisia

TUNIS (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi began a surprise visit to neighbouring Tunisia on Monday, his first known trip since injuring his hip in July.

Qadhafi, whose country is under a U.N. air embargo, arrived by land for "a visit of brotherhood and rest" at the invitation of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, an official statement said.

Tunisian television did not show the Libyan leader but said he met with Ben Ali and several government

ministers in a desert oasis at Tozeur, 400 kilometres south of Tunis, where foreign leaders are entertained.

Officials, however, did not give the duration or full itinerary of Qadhafi's visit. The trip was not announced in advance, though Ben Ali extended the invitation to Qadhafi when he visited Libya in August.

Qadhafi was first driven to Gabes, 365 kilometres south of Tunis, after crossing the border at Ras Jedir where he was met by Interior Minister

Ali Chaoueh, officials said. It was Qadhafi's first known trip abroad since he broke a bone near his hip while exercising and underwent surgery in July, officials have said.

The Libyan leader last visited Tunisia in January 1996, when he met Ben Ali in the southern town of Medenine.

Since 1992, Libya has struggled with U.N. Security Council sanctions that ban direct flights to and from the country.

Bill to end direct election of Israeli PM passes committee

TEL AVIV (AFP) — In a setback for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Monday, the legislative committee of the Israeli parliament gave the green light for a bill cancelling direct elections for the country's prime minister.

Committee members gave their approval for the draft legislation to be referred to the full parliament where the first debate is expected to be held in two weeks.

The bill must then be passed in three readings by an absolute majority of 61 MPs in the 120-member parliament before it becomes law.

The draft legislation is backed by MPs from both the opposition and the ruling coalition but is strongly opposed by both Netanyahu and opposition Labour Party leader Ehud Barak. The bill was approved in a preliminary reading in the Israeli parliament in May before the summer recess.

Netanyahu, head of the right-wing Likud bloc, became Israel's first prime minister directly chosen by

the voters in the last elections in May 1996.

He benefited from a reform adopted under the then Labour government in 1995. Previously the prime minister had been chosen by MPs.

The new system has vastly increased the prime minister's power and independence from the political parties represented in parliament and makes it extremely difficult to oust the prime minister.

Netanyahu and Barak argue the bill being put before parliament would return Israel to a system where prime ministers were too beholden to demands by various coalition partners.

Proponents of the change include critics of both politicians from within their own parties who claim the current law has encouraged an autocratic style of rule in both Israel's main parties.

The Israeli parliament reconvened Monday for its first meeting after the summer recess.

Iraqi officials step up campaign against U.N. arms monitors

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi officials lashed out at U.N. arms monitors Monday, saying that they act unprofessionally and in one case turned on music and danced as they examined a missile production site.

Iraq repeatedly has accused U.N. weapons inspectors of espionage and on Aug. 5 ordered an end to surprise inspections by the arms experts, effectively banning all searches for elements of its past weapons programmes.

Iraq has recently mounted a campaign to discredit the remaining inspectors, who are only allowed to visit weapons sites where the

United Nations already has surveillance equipment installed.

One Iraqi official, Khalil Hameed, accused the monitors of turning on cassette recorders and dancing while examining a missile site.

Hameed also said monitors used their personal cameras to take photographs of civilians, passing cars and visitors to the missile production site that he administers.

Iraqi authorities arranged the interview with Hameed to back up accusations by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz that the inspectors engaged in espionage. Aziz made that accusation in a letter to U.N. Secretary

General Kofi Annan, which has released Saturday. U.N. weapons officials in Baghdad were not available for comment.

Sudai Mohammed of the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate, which coordinates activities for the remaining 40 inspectors in Iraq, said that some inspectors carried cameras and photographed army movements and activities in and around Iraqi weapons sites.

"Incidents like this unfortunately indicate that the inspectors use the authority and mandate given to them in a bad manner to collect information," Mohammed said.

Explosion of Gulf war bomb kills 3 Iraqis

BAGHDAD (R) — Three people were killed when a bomb dropped during the 1991 Gulf war exploded near the Iraqi city of Rutba, 400 kilometres Northwest of Baghdad, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported on Monday.

Three people died in the desert of Rutba in Anbar governorate when a bomb left over from the projectiles of the 30-state aggression exploded," INA said.

The official press carries occasional reports of people and animals being killed or wounded by such bombs, dropped during the U.S.-led campaign to oust Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

INA said Iraqi civil defence teams had defused 56,282 allied bombs and rockets left over from the Gulf war in the governorate.

In a related development, the official Iraqi News Agency said Monday that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his cabinet reviewed the inspections.

The cabinet also reviewed contacts with Annan to resolve the current row over spot inspections, the agency reported.

The United Nations imposed sweeping economic sanctions against Iraq

after Baghdad's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The sanctions will not be lifted until the inspectors verify that Baghdad has eliminated its weapons of mass destruction.

Israeli army document warns another Hebron massacre possible

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli army document warns that a Jewish extremist could massacre Palestinians at the West Bank city of Hebron, as happened in 1994, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz said Monday.

The internal army document says that "due to the critical feeling of isolation among settlers in Hebron and the continuing threat to their lives, a murderer who would carry out a massacre of Palestinians could arise," said Haaretz.

In February 1994, doctor Baruch Goldstein, a settler from the Hebron area, opened fire in Al Ibrahimi Mosque at Hebron's Tomb of the Patriarchs, killing 29 Muslims and

wounding many others.

The army document said that "the Jewish community in Hebron is sending out signals of real distress. It has a feeling of being insecure, with a threatening future, that is exposed to continued murder and persecution from all sides," Haaretz said.

Israel's Channel Two television, to which the document was first leaked, said the paper emphasised the increasing activity of Rabbi Moshe Levinger in the Hebron area and the "establishment of a military security committee which he heads."

Levinger, an extreme right-wing leader in Kiryat Arba, a

settlement near Hebron, has been attacking the settlement's more moderate committee and threatening its status, the army document said.

But Israeli military sources said that the document was composed by an officer who was not authorised to deal with the issues he discusses, said Haaretz.

"The document does not reflect the Central Command's assessment of the situation," military sources added.

"The document depicts an inaccurate and exaggerated picture," Haaretz quoted the sources as saying.

The army spokesman had no comment on the document.

Debt row halts main Algeria dailies for third straight day

Zeroual loses second advisor

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's four main independent dailies failed to appear for the third consecutive day on Monday over a debt dispute seen by their editors as a government attempt to choke freedom of the press.

The dailies El Watan, Le Matin, Le Soir d'Algerie and La Tribune, which are seen as the most critical of President Liamine Zeroual's government policy, have been off the news stands since Saturday.

Government-owned printing presses refused to publish them unless they pay back their debts.

The editors, decrying the debt calls at short notice as an oblique decision by the government using its monopoly on printing to stifle press freedom, turned the dispute into an indefinite protest strike.

Three other dailies — Liberte, Al Khabar and Alam Assiassi — voluntarily did not appear on Sunday to show solidarity with the four dailies.

Alam Assiassi broke ranks on Monday, appearing with a commentary urging Prime Minister Ahmad Ouyahia to intervene to end the row. It did not say why its editors

changed their mind.

But Le Quotidien d'Oran daily was off the newsstands on Monday in solidarity with the absent dailies. Liberte and Al Khabar also did not publish.

The government made no comment on the dispute but officials at the printing presses were insisting their decision was based upon pure commercial reasons.

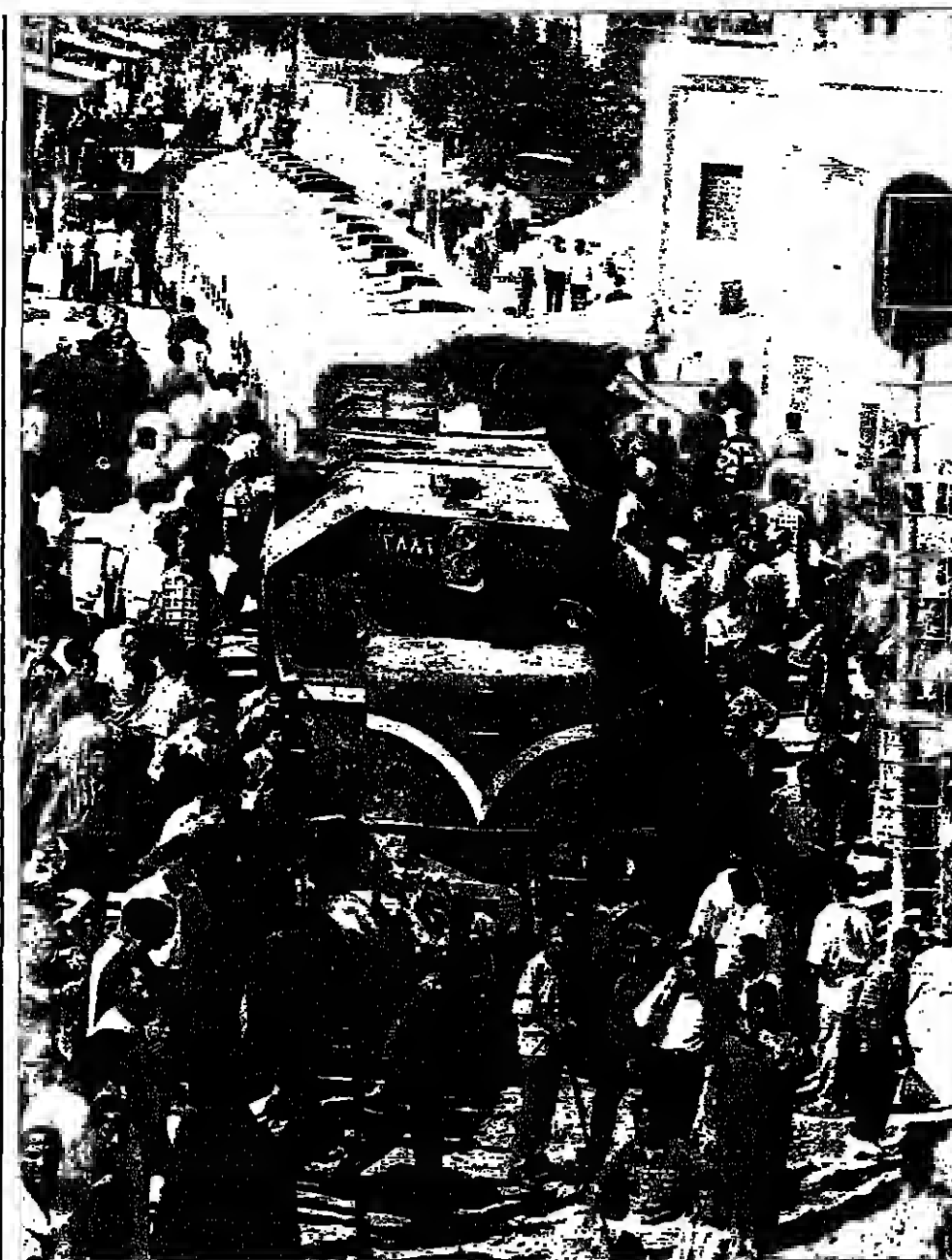
They said the government uses its monopoly over the ownership of printing and paper import as a censorship weapon, pointing out the case of the independent

La Nation newspaper which was shut down two years ago because of unpaid debts.

The editors also argued that the four papers singled out by the printing presses had printed stories criticising senior officials, including allegations of misconduct involving Justice Minister Mohammed Adami.

Adami resigned on Sunday because of these allegations.

State-run radio said he quit to dedicate his full time to fight allegations in court.



A crowd of curious onlookers Monday gather around the train which crashed the day before (Reuters photo)

Egyptian rescuers sift through wreckage of train crash

KAFR AL DAUWAR (AFP) — Rescuers worked into the early hours Monday to remove victims from the mangled wreckage of a train which derailed in a crowded station in northern Egypt, killing more than 40 people and injuring 90.

The interior ministry said 43 people were killed when the train lost its brakes and smashed into a station in the Nile Delta town of Kafir Al Dauwar, 117 miles north of Cairo.

But the health ministry said 47 people had been killed and 104 injured.

Witnesses said rescue teams working by hand sifted through the debris until the early hours of Monday morning looking for victims while two cranes lifted the mangled wreckage of the wagons off the tracks.

The accident occurred on a secondary line as local train 894 pulled into the Kafir Al Dauwar station at high speed.

Officials said the brakes had failed because fitter dodgers who were riding on top of the wagons had tampered with the main brake system and disrupted the connection between the wagons and the locomotive.

The five-car train smashed into the station and several carriages rammed into the crowded platforms killing and injuring scores of passengers, people waiting to board the train as well as vendors selling refreshments.

Witnesses said the train was travelling at least 100 kilometres per hour when it entered the station.

"I saw the driver waving fran-

ically and realised he wasn't going to manage to stop," said Hassan Mohammad Hussein, a railway employee responsible for controlling the points at the entrance to the station.

Another eyewitness, Azmi Abdul Hamid, told how the train had slammed into the station's memorial to the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, "a reinforced concrete structure three metres high."

Health Minister Ismail Salam rushed to the scene of the accident late Sunday to supervise rescue operations.

A state of emergency was declared in hospitals in Alexandria, 30 kilometres northwest of here, amid appeals for residents of the Mediterranean city to donate blood.

Around 200 Jordanians imprisoned, 290 missing in Syria — Judeh

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government Monday said the number of Jordanian detainees in Syria has been most recently estimated at 200, while an additional 290 have been reported missing.

Information Minister Nasser Judeh, in remarks quoted by the BBC, said a number of personnel working for government departments in Jordan went to Syria on official missions and did not return. He did not specify the number.

The whereabouts of a Jordanian bank official who went to Syria four months ago are currently unknown, the minister added.

Judeh said the Jordanian detainees issue has surfaced now because it was extensively raised in the local press, prompting the government to take action. But he added that Jordan has been following up on their cases for years.

Meanwhile, Syrian officials were quoted Monday by the London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat as saying that Damascus was "verifying" a list of names supplied by Amman. The officials challenged Jordan to give "the name of... one Jordanian who has disap-

peared in Syria," according to the report.

Also Monday, Judeh met with the Lower House of Parliament's National Guidance Committee to discuss media affairs and the country's information policy.

Judeh said the Information Ministry is working to begin telecasting Jordan's satellite television programmes to the Americas, Europe and other parts of the world and hopes to achieve this objective "in the near future."

In addition, he said, the ministry plans to use Jordan Television's third channel to cover Parliament sessions and intends to boost transmission to reach all parts of the country by the beginning of next year.

Admitting that the official media has had "shortcomings" in covering certain areas, such as national achievements, tourism and culture, Judeh said plans have now been prepared to rectify the situation.

Referring to the Press and Publications Law, he said that the legislation went through all the necessary constitutional channels and that the government is committed to applying it.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turk court orders jailing of Islamist mayor

ISTANBUL (R) — A Turkish court has ordered prosecutors to enforce a 10-month jail term against Istanbul's popular Islamist mayor, convicted for provoking hatred in a speech, the Anatolia news agency said on Monday. The court in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir told Istanbul prosecutors to jail Recep Tayyip Erdogan in what is seen as the latest move to curb the influence of the high-profile mayor within the Islamist movement. But Erdogan, whose final appeal against the verdict was rejected last month, will ask for the jail term to be delayed for a further four months, a spokesman said.

Air Algeria staff end strike after 13 days

ALGIERS (R) — Air Algeria ground staff and flight crews on Monday ended a 13-day strike which severely disrupted traffic for much of that period, officials said. "We ended the stoppage on Monday after reaching accord with the airline's management," a union official told Reuters. State-run radio quoted Air Algérie's chief executive officer and chairman, Faisal Khelil, as announcing the end of the strike following successful talks with the union.

Turk's expulsion from France sparks clash

STRASBOURG (AFP) — Police clashed late Sunday at Strasbourg airport in eastern France with some 60 people trying to prevent the expulsion of a Turkish immigrant, local authorities said. The protesters, who had earlier laid siege to the police station in nearby Metz, blocked the airport runway in a bid to prevent a Turkish Airways flight from leaving with Hacı Günes, 33, aboard. The plane finally took off nearly three hours late after police cleared the runway, but a local official refused to say if Günes went with it. Three Turks were arrested, including Günes' sister and brother-in-law, Patrice Bernau of a human rights group in Nancy said.

Pharaonic tombs found in Egyptian Delta

CAIRO (AFP) — Archaeologists have unearthed first and second dynasty tombs (3100-2686 BC) in Egypt's eastern Nile Delta region that will help experts learn more about the greening of the area, Al Ahram government newspaper reported Monday, quoting antiquities officials. More than 20 two-room tombs made of limestone were found in Manshiyat Ezzar village in the northern province of Daqahliya, the secretary general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, Gaballah Ali Gaballah, told Al Ahram.

Rights society urges 'effective solutions' for environmental concerns

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The Jordan Society for Human Rights Monday urged the government, Parliament and the general public to find "effective solutions" and translate plans into action to solve a number of "aggravated" environmental problems facing the country.

"Despite progressive efforts and achievements to protect the environment, such as transferring the Ruseif

waste dump and constructing a new waste facility in Ma'an, ecological problems are worsening," said a society statement.

The government, responding to years of public complaints, said two weeks ago that it would relocate the 800-dunum Ruseif garbage dump to a nearby site under a gradual process ending in the year 2000.

The statement said that although the government contained this summer's

water contamination crisis, which was "the most dangerous event to hit the capital during this year and caused gross losses, citizens are still asking about the reasons behind the problem and the parties responsible for it."

Another serious ecological problem that still worries citizens, according to the statement, is "nuclear radioactivity which could leak from the Israeli nuclear plant at Dimona."

"The government denied that Jordan

has been affected by radioactivity without giving an explanation to citizens about Israeli and other media reports on radioactivity leaking from the plant," the statement added.

Several weeks ago, the government said daily tests had not registered any abnormal nuclear radioactivity in Jordan following reports in the local and foreign press claiming that Israel's nuclear reactor in the Negev desert was posing a threat of radioactivity to the region.

The society urged the government to increase its efforts to solve environmental problems that it said were being caused by the cement factory in Rashadiah, near Tafleh, and the Irbid and Khirbat Sarura wastewater treatment plants.

It also urged the government to solve the "continuous pollution" in Jerash's springs and in surface and underground water in the Zarqa basin, a problem the society attributed to factory waste.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10French Cartoon
15:30Banat in Pyjamas (Ep. 3)
16:00Life Choice
16:30Small Talk
17:00Doc - The Lions Kingdom
18:00French Programmes
19:00Les Coeurs Brules
19:15Le Journal
19:15French Programme
19:30Fractales
19:30News headlines
19:35Step by Step
20:00What Would You Do?
20:30Drover's Gold (Ep. 3)
21:05You and your Car
21:30UN Cut
22:00News in English
22:30Lonesome Dove
23:59Film - Body Rock
01:30End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:21Fajr
05:38Sunrise/Duha
11:30Dhuhr
14:32Asr
17:03Maghreb
18:20Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4634590
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

4622366

Anglican Church Tel.

4624853/4624811

St. Atram Syrian Orthodox

Church Tel. 4771751

Amman International Church

Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter

Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la

Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646138

Church of Presentation, Swei-

fieh Tel. 5920146

The United Catholic Church

Tel. 4624757

The English-Language

Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel.

4892679

The Baptist Church Tel.

4628052

The Armenian Catholic

Church Tel. 4771331

The American Orthodox

Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Moderate weather conditions will

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

prevail with temperatures rising

gradually becoming around aver-

age and winds northwesterly to

southeasterly moderate. In

Aqaba, winds will be northerly

moderate and seas calm.

Amman14/27

Aqaba18/23

Deserts10/29

Jordan Valley19/34

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 24, Aqaba 30 Humidity:

Aqaba 43 per cent.

Following are the highest temper-

atures expected today in the fol-

lowing areas:

Ajloun23

Jerash29

Um Qays29

Madaba28

Petra28

Dead Sea35

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Mukhlis Halaseh519220

Dr. Rami Sukkar5856457

Dr. Fadi Al Khalil5865456

Dr. Youssef Al Fagih4390104

Al Asema pharmacy4637055

Al Salam pharmacy4636730

Shmeisani pharmacy4637660

Nairoukh pharmacy4623672

IRBID:

Dr. Ali Al Shuqairi7100069

Al Quds pharmacy(-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Issa Al Omari901266

Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111

Civil Defence Department

5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue

Center4630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Rescue Police 192, 4621111,

4637777

Fire Brigade4617101

Blood Bank4775121

Highway Police5343402

Traffic Police4896390

Public Security Dept. 4630321

Hotel Complaints5605800

Price Complaints5661176

Water & Sewage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints

Center4787111

Telephone Information (directory

assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs5661101

Jordan Television4773111

Radio4774111

Water Authority5680100

J. Electricity Authority5815615

Electric Power Co.4636381

RJ Flight Information44-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special

Surgery5921199

The Islamic Abdi5666131/7

Hussein Medical Centre Tel.

5856856

Luzmila4630195

Khalidi Maternity4644281/6

Akileh Maternity4624412/2

Jabal Amman Maternity4642362

Maihas, J. Amman4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani5607071

Shmeisani Hospital5669131

University Hospital5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital566727/9

Al-Ahli, Abdali5664164/6

Italian Al-Muhajreen4777101/3

Al-Bashir4775111/26

Army, Marka4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital5602240/50

Arzal Hospital5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

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In setback for Schroeder, German economics nominee quits

BONN, Germany (AP) — The man tapped to be Germany's economics minister turned down the job Monday, saying Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schröder's government was not putting enough emphasis on market-oriented ideas.

The decision by Jost Stollmann, a nonpartisan computer entrepreneur who was a symbol of change in Schröder's campaign team, was the first major setback for Germany's incoming leader since he won last month's election.

Stollmann told Schröder he withdrew his name because the victorious Social Democrats planned to shift powers away from the economics ministry. Schröder's spokesman Uwe-Karsten Heye said.

He also had "reservations" about parts of the left-leaning government agenda sealed by the Social Democrats and their junior partner, the Greens, over the weekend, Heye said.

Heye did not elaborate. But Stollmann has irked labour unions and the Social Democrats' left wing with his outspoken calls for deep reforms in Germany's social welfare state.

Stollmann — and with him Schröder — apparently fell

victim to a power grab by future finance minister Oskar Lafontaine, who wants to boost his job by snaring the economics ministry's authority for European affairs.

Lafontaine, the powerful chairman of the Social Democrats, is an old-style leftist. He favours a higher government role in steering the economy than Schröder, whose pro-market reputation and appeal to a "new centre" in German politics was key to the party's Sept. 27 election victory.

With unemployment stuck above 10 per cent and the economy slowing, both agree on the new government's No. 1 priority: creating jobs.

Stollmann's office said there was no immediate comment on his decision.

Stollmann will be replaced by Werner Mueller, an industry consultant and former utilities executive who has advised Schröder on energy policy.

Schröder was due to unveil the new Cabinet and the responsibilities of each ministry later Monday. He has already named a Social Democrat, Rudolf Scharping, as defence minister.

The government team will be younger and include more women than that of the out-

going centre-right coalition.

As junior partner, the Greens will get only three Cabinet posts instead of the four they demanded when coalition talks began two weeks ago, party co-chair Gunda Roedel said Monday.

But the foreign ministry is expected to go to the Greens' Joschka Fischer, a former student radical who renounced his pacifist leanings in horror at the war in Bosnia.

Sunday, party leaders announced final details of a coalition agreement that shifts Germany's course in important areas such as atomic power, the environment, integration of foreigners and taxes.

Capping the coalition deal was a pledge to scrap cuts in retirement benefits and health care pushed through by Kohl.

Other points include agreement to raise energy taxes, open talks with utilities on shutting down Germany's 19 nuclear power plants and give children of foreigners automatic German citizenship in a move aimed at promoting integration.

Party leaders are to sign the pact Tuesday. It must still be approved by special conventions of both parties next weekend.



Jost Stollmann (left), 43-year-old head of a computer service company and Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schröder are pictured prior to coalition talks with members of the Greens party in Bonn, Oct. 8, 1998. Stollmann, designated German economics minister has declined to take up the post, a spokesman for Schröder said Monday (Reuters photo)

Hanson reelected as One Nation leader

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Right-wing politician Pauline Hanson and her two closest advisers survived a confidence vote Monday at the first meeting of her One Nation party since a disastrous result in Australia's Oct. 3 national election.

The 11 One Nation members of the Queensland state parliament and the party's lone successful candidate in the national election voted unanimously to keep Hanson, failed candidate David Oldfield and national director David Ettridge as party leaders. Oldfield said.

A meeting of members in Brisbane voted on three motions of confidence, one for each leader. Oldfield

said. "Those motions were moved separately and individually so there could be no confusion. It was indicated there was an equal vote of confidence in the three people," he said.

Hanson lost her parliamentary seat in the election. One Nation attracted about 9 per cent of the national vote, but won only one seat in the upper house of the federal Parliament.

"Pauline has agreed to ease herself into her new, hands-on role as president (of One Nation)," Oldfield said.

There had been speculation Hanson would sack Ettridge after he was blamed for several campaign disasters, including

his election day boast that One Nation would win 15 seats in the lower house.

Under One Nation's party structure, control rests equally with Hanson, Oldfield and Ettridge as directors of a company called One Nation Pty. Ltd. Hanson's new role would include making public appearances, including a major promotional role in campaigning for an election in New South Wales state next March.

Oldfield would become party spokesman. Hanson rose to prominence with claims Australia is being "swamped by Asians" and with attacks on multinational companies and Aboriginal welfare payments.

Teacher killed, police constable injured in Pakistan terrorist strikes

MULTAN, Pakistan (AFP) — A primary school teacher was shot dead and a police constable critically injured in two separate attacks blamed by Pakistani police on unidentified terrorist gangs, officials said Monday.

The incidents in the central province of Punjab came three days after a former provincial governor, Hakim Mohammad Saeed, was murdered in southern Karachi and a prominent religious figure Maulana Abdullah was killed here.

Officials said teacher Khuda Baksh was cycling home late Sunday when he was attacked by two men riding a motorcycle near

Kot Addu, a town 95 kilometres east of here.

In the other incident gunmen opened fire at a police van near the town of Kabirwala in Punjab, seriously injuring a policeman, they said.

Police said they had no immediate clues as to the motives behind the two attacks.

Scores of people have been killed in Punjab, the biggest Pakistani province, this year in a wave of religiously-motivated shootings that the police have linked to religious militants from majority Sunni and minority Shiite Muslims.

Five Shiites were shot

dead at Kot Addu in September. A police guard at the Iranian cultural centre in Multan was killed this month.

The government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has come under increasing pressure over the killings in Karachi, where violence in recent years has left thousands dead, and the sectarian vendetta in his home province of Punjab.

The government has launched a high-level investigation into last week's high-profile murder of Saeed, a philanthropist, author and pioneer in establishment of research institutions.

Human remains found at McDonald's restaurant

BRUSSELS (AFP) — A skull, a leg and other human remains were found in a rubbish bag dumped near a McDonald's restaurant in central Brussels Monday in what appeared to be a stunt by animal rights activists.

Yves de Jonghe d'Ardoye, mayor of the Ixelles district where the restaurant is located, said the remains had probably been stolen this weekend from a nearby cemetery, where a number of corpses are being moved under renovation work.

"Thankfully, it does not appear that anyone was murdered," he said.

Jonghe d'Ardoye said the local authorities had received a warning last week that a fast-food outlet in the area would be targeted by animal rights activists.

"Everything points to this being the work of an anti fast-food collective," the mayor said.

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF), a militant group based in Britain, last month claimed responsibility for arson attacks on six McDonald's and two Quick restaurants in northern Belgium.

The most serious incident resulted in the total destruction of a McDonald's outlet in the town of Puurs. None of the attacks have resulted in any injuries.

The group warned at the time that it planned further action against McDonald's in protest at its alleged complicity in the destruction of the Amazon rain forest.

Police have also not ruled out the possibility that the find means the "Butcher of

Mons", believed to have killed at least four women last year, had struck again, a spokesman for the Brussels public prosecutor said.

Mons, 60 kilometres south-west of Brussels, was plunged into shock last spring when police found the chopped-up remains of the women in 15 bags scattered around the town.

The killer, who taunted police by dumping the bags in evocatively-named locations like the Chemin de l'Inquiétude (the path of worry), has still not been detained.

Members of the team investigating the Mons murders have travelled to Brussels to assess whether there is a link between the latest discovery and last year's killings, the prosecutor's office said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Charles, Camilla take cruise

LONDON (R) — Prince Charles and his lover Camilla Parker Bowles have taken a foreign holiday together, cruising around Greece with a group of close friends, British newspapers reported Monday. The week-long cruise last month, which included several trips ashore, was seen as another step in a long and discreet campaign to win public acceptance for Parker Bowles as a consort for the heir to the British throne. Charles first met Parker Bowles 25 years ago and continued the liaison during his ill-fated marriage to the late Princess Diana, provoking disapproval bordering on vilification from vast members of the British public. The relationship was put on hold in the months after Diana's death in a car crash in Paris last year but the couple now are being seen together more frequently. The Daily Mail newspaper quoted one senior royal aide as waxing sentimental over their holiday. "They looked so sweet together it brought tears to my eyes," the paper quoted the newspaper as saying. The couple's next big semi-public occasion comes in mid November when Parker Bowles throws a 30th birthday party for Charles at his rural Highgrove home. Charles's teenage sons will be among the 200 guests as well as a number of European royals.

War crimes tribunal judges put off Bosnia trip

THE HAGUE (AFP) — A visit by judges from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to Bosnia was postponed indefinitely "for security reason" a court spokeswoman said Monday. "There were concerns about the presence of land mines and for the moment another visit is not probable," she said. The visit was linked to a case focusing on ethnic cleansing by local Croats in April 1993 in the area surrounding the village of Ahmici-Santici, 60 kilometres northwest of Sarajevo. The trial of brothers Mirjan and Zoran Kupreskic, their cousin Vlatko Kupreskic and three others opened on Aug. 16. The trip was planned to allow the judges to see for themselves the places where the crimes are alleged to have taken place. More than 100 of the 356 Bosnian Muslims in Ahmici were killed, including many who were burned to death in their homes. Others were forced to flee after an attack by Croat armed forces on April 16, 1993. The accused gave themselves up voluntarily to the war crimes tribunal in The Hague in October 1997, with the exception of Vlatko Kupreskic, who was arrested by NATO troops in December last year. The accused face life imprisonment if found guilty.

Six dead, nine missing after Malaysian boat capsizes

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Rescuers retrieved six bodies Monday from choppy seas off Malaysia's western coast, and nine other people were missing after a passenger boat capsized, the national news agency reported. Eighteen others on the boat, which was carrying mostly workers from a holiday resort on Pulau Besar island to the mainland, swam to safety or were rescued after the boat sank at around midnight Sunday, Bernama news agency said. Divers from the police and fire department were trying to locate the capsized boat. They feared passengers might be trapped inside it. The captain of the boat was among the missing, Bernama reported. The cause of the disaster was not immediately known, but the boat reportedly sank in rough seas in an area about 200 kilometres from the capital, Kuala Lumpur. Bernama quoted Deputy Transport Minister Mohamed Ali Rustam as saying the boat, designed to carry only 12 passengers, was carrying more than 30 but had only 17 life jackets on board. He said the boat company was using a tourist boat to ferry passengers because the route's regular boat was being repaired. Bernama added. He said he would recommend that the Marine Department revoke the company's licence.

French village furious about raid on new cave find

PARIS (R) — A small French hamlet said Monday it was considering legal action for negligence against a neighbouring village after a neolithic cave was raided by robbers just hours after its discovery. A road worker stumbled on the prehistoric cave Friday while working on a motorway project in France's southern Languedoc region. The site contained the remains of four humans as well as a small pottery vase and an axe. The find was reported to the local village of Mouzeze, and the media was informed, with national radio describing it as an "exceptional" find. Despite all the publicity, Mouzeze officials allowed the cave to be left unguarded after nightfall and robbers struck between Saturday and Sunday, stealing the artefacts. After the robbery, another local village, Villeneuve realised that the site actually fell under its jurisdiction. "Police were left at the cave during the day, but not at night, and there was an opening which thieves were able to get through," said Villeneuve's mayor, Gerard Maistre. "They should have done better. If I had been involved (earlier) I would have taken a decision to completely seal off the cave." Asked if he was considering taking legal action against the neighbouring authorities for their lax security, Maistre replied: "We have to consider the matter." An archaeologist who visited the site Saturday said he thought the bones were those of a woman and three children and were between 3,000 and 4,000 years old. "There are two things which enable us to give a date: a small vase, which is practically intact, and a polished axe head," Christian Olive told France Inter radio Saturday. Both the objects have now vanished.

No money to fight childhood TB in Russian republic

MOSCOW (AFP) — The Russian republic of Altay in central Siberia has run out of money and medicine to fight tuberculosis among children, the ITAR-TASS agency said Monday. Altay, which has a birth rate almost four times higher than the national average, has given its people until Nov. 30 to make donations to both government and non-governmental organisations to aid its children's hospital. The republic suffers from a high level of tuberculosis, with the adult average 1.6 times above national norms. Funding channelled to fighting the potentially lethal respiratory disease covers only 22 per cent of medical needs, according to the organisations behind the collection. A total of 2.5 million Russians suffer from tuberculosis, a disease which has been spreading rapidly across the country, first deputy Health Minister Gennady Onishchenko told Moscow radio last Friday. The number of people sick with the disease in Russia increased by 8.5 per cent in the first 10 months of 1998, the minister said.

Italian hopeful appears headed towards success

ROME (AP) — Massimo D'Alema, a former Communist who is trying to put together Italy's next government, appeared headed towards success as he prepared to report to the president Monday on his progress in forming a majority.

Although unable to win the backing of the autonomy-minded Northern League or the leader of a hardline Communist group, D'Alema was reported to be optimistic.

According to news reports, D'Alema will have completed an outline of his policies before his meeting in the evening with President Oscar

Luigi Scalfaro and hopes to have his Cabinet in place by Wednesday so he can go before Parliament for the required vote of confidence by the end of the week.

He scored an important victory Sunday when Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the highly respected treasury and budget minister who helped oversee Italy's acceptance into the European Monetary Union, agreed to join his team.

Ciampi had been said to be offended by criticism from centrist leader Francesco Cossiga, a former president whose followers can give D'Alema the votes he needs

for a majority in the Chamber of Deputies.

Communist complaints that the budget didn't contain enough funds for job creation sparked the crisis which led to Romano Prodi's resignation as premier on Oct. 9.

Fausto Bertinotti, the leader of the Communist Refoundation Party, said he would pursue "constructive opposition" to a D'Alema government.

Prodi's 2 1/2-year-long centre-left coalition lasted longer than all but one government in Italy since World War II.

200 troops revolt, block roads in western Georgia

TBILISI, Georgia (AP) — More than 200 soldiers bitterly opposed to Georgia's president revolted Monday, blocking roads in a western region with stolen tanks, trucks and machine guns and clashing with government troops.

President Eduard Shevardnadze demanded that the mutinous soldiers lay down their weapons and return to their barracks, and threatened to use force if they refused.

"The (government) powers are controlling the situation," Shevardnadze said on state television. He threatened to impose a state of emergency. Shevardnadze, who has survived assassination attempts and several rebellions, put Georgian troops on combat readiness, said presidential spokesman Vakhtang Abashidze.

Security was tightened around key buildings in Tbilisi, the capital, including the government headquarters, parliament and broadcasting centre.

The Interfax news agency said. The revolt began when soldiers from a tank brigade in the western town of Senaki took over their garrison and stole 10 tanks, two armoured personnel carriers, and more than 50 machine guns, said Abashidze.

Some of the soldiers then blocked two roads leading westwards to the Black Sea port city of Poti with seven of the tanks, Abashidze said. Others headed eastward toward the city of Kutaisi, and clashed with government troops en route.

Georgian television said the rebel soldiers were negotiating with government officials, but Russian news agencies said the talks had broken down.

Earlier, the soldiers shot at the car of a government official coming to talk to them, but no one was wounded, the Interfax news agency said.

Georgian Defence Minister Maj. Gen. David Tevzadze and the Minister of State Security, Lt. Gen. Dzhenal Gakhokidze,

were both sent to the scene.

The mutiny was being led by Akakiy Eliava, a military commander who is also a supporter of the late president Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Abashidze said.

Gamsakhurdia, Georgia's leader when it became independent in 1991, was ousted in early 1992 and fought a short war in a bid to return to power. He died in mysterious circumstances in 1994.

His followers remain bitterly opposed to Shevardnadze.

Shevardnadze blames Gamsakhurdia's supporters for the Feb. 9 attack on his motorcade that left two of Shevardnadze's bodyguards dead. At least eight suspects have been arrested.

The speaker of the Georgian parliament, Zurab Zhvaniya, said the rebels were demanding the restoration of Gamsakhurdia's parliament. He said the rebels issued a statement warning Russian troops not to intervene.

'Taiwan, China still lack trust'

TOKYO (AFP) — Taiwan and China still lack trust and their relationship is still affected by "a certain degree" of animosity, Taiwan's top negotiator with China Koo Chen-Fu told reporters in Japan on his way home from Beijing Monday.

"There is still a lack of trust and a certain degree of animosity" on both sides Koo said during a stopover at Narita airport, eastern Japan, Monday, Kyodo News reported.

Koo, chairman of Taiwan's main negotiating body with the mainland, however, said he

was satisfied with six-day trip and his talks with President Jiang Zemin, Vice Premier Qian Qichen and other top officials.

It was the first time the two sides have held such contacts in mainland China since Communist forces won the civil war in 1949 forcing the nationalists to Taiwan.

No reason was given for Koo's stopover, although the official quipped: "There was no error in our direction." Koo said regular working-level meetings between the two

sides would resume at an early stage.

He said the realisation of mutual visits between the leaders of the two countries "is a matter of timing" requiring the support of both the Chinese and Taiwanese people.

In his meeting with the Chinese president, Koo, chairman of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation, suggested Jiang meet Taiwan's President Lee Teng-Hui at an Asia-Pacific summit in Kuala Lumpur next month. Koo was due in Taiwan on Monday.

WS IN BRIEF

aries, Camilla take on

Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, arrived in London on Monday for a week-long tour. The couple will be visiting several hospitals and charities, including the Prince of Wales Cancer Centre. Charles is expected to meet with Prime Minister Tony Blair on Tuesday.

imes tribunal judges

Out of Bosnia trip



Chief negotiator for Sinn Féin, Martin McGuinness, leaves 10 Downing Street after talks with Prime Minister Tony Blair. McGuinness insisted that the next move in the peace process must come from the Unionists (Reuters photo)

Blair holds talks on N. Ireland arms row

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair intervened in a row between Northern Ireland's political leaders over guerrilla disarmament Monday, making clear he did not want the issue to hold up other elements of the province's fragile peace agreement.

Blair held talks lasting more than 90 minutes with Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin, political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and was due to meet Northern Ireland's First Minister David Trimble later.

Trimble, leader of the pro-British Ulster Unionist Party, says Sinn Féin cannot take seats in a new power-sharing executive until the IRA starts handing over the arms they used in their 30-year war against British rule. But there was no sign of a breakthrough at the meeting and afterwards McGuinness said it was up to Trimble to "keep his word" and appoint Sinn Féin members to the new executive as laid down in the Good Friday peace deal.

"David Trimble, like anyone else in the process, has to keep his word," McGuinness told reporters. "David Trimble is first minister. He was given the task of implementing the agreement. That agreement is in default at the moment."

Sinn Féin wants the executive, the ruling arm of the devolved Northern Ireland assembly, to be set up before Oct. 31, the deadline set for the first meeting of a joint council with the Irish Republic.

Trimble, under intense pressure from his party, wants the IRA to start dismantling its vast arsenal first, even if this means the Oct. 31 deadline slips.

But Blair signalled he is no mood for delays. "Past experience shows deadlines can have a productive effect," his spokesman told reporters before the meeting.

Trimble sounded a note of optimism before his date with Blair, saying he was confident the impasse would be broken "sooner or later."

"We have just got a temporary glitch caused by the inability of the republican movement to face its responsibilities," he told BBC radio.

The Protestant Trimble was last week awarded the Nobel Peace Prize along with Roman Catholic nationalist John Hume for their joint efforts in forging the Northern Ireland peace accord.

McGuinness said this should give him the power to face down anti-peace agreement forces within his party.

"I think clearly there is an expectation now that those people within unionism who are opposed to an agreement are told that the game is up and we are pressing on decisively to implement the agreement," McGuinness said.

Blair and his Irish Republic counterpart Bertie Ahern want the accord to gain momentum through the creation of new political structures which provide for the continuation of British rule at the same time as new links with Dublin.

The agreement calls for the completion of guerrilla disarmament within two years but gives no deadline to start the process.

Chile may seek diplomatic solution for Pinochet release

SANTIAGO (AFP) — Chile may seek to use diplomatic channels to secure the release of its former military dictator Augusto Pinochet from British custody, political sources said here Monday.

However, the Chilean government would prefer to have a more transparent judicial decision end the impasse over the arrest of Pinochet, who is under guard in a medical clinic in London on a warrant of genocide from Spanish authorities, according to the sources.

A foreign ministry lawyer, Santiago Benadava, was set to travel to London where he is expected to press for a deal in which Britain would expel Pinochet, but not extradite him to Spain.

Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza said Sunday Chile could launch diplomatic negotiations to spare the 82-year-old retired general extradition to Spain, where magistrates want to question him about the death, torture and disappearance of Spanish citizens or Chileans of Spanish origin during his 1973-1990 dictatorship.

Insulza declined to comment on speculation Britain would deport Pinochet. "I have never made any comment on that issue," he said.

But he warned that Pinochet's detention could last a long time. "Clearly, this is a problem that will not be settled in 24 hours," Insulza said, adding that it was unlikely to lead to a break in diplomatic relations between Chile and Britain.

Official news media here raised the possibility Pinochet would be expelled, not at Chile's request but through the initiative of the British Foreign Office.

In London, meanwhile, Pinochet promised to fight any attempt to extradite him from London to face questioning by the Spanish judges over genocide, torture and terrorism.

In a statement issued through a British legal firm, the 82-year-old said any extradition attempt "will be resolutely opposed."

Chile has lodged a formal protest over Pinochet's arrest, saying he enjoys diplomatic immunity as a life senator, but Britain insists immunity does not apply in this case.

NATO allies to join U.S. spy planes in flying over Kosovo

BRUSSELS (AFP) — U.S. spy planes continued their reconnaissance flights over Kosovo this weekend as NATO prepared to give the go-ahead to other countries to join in the surveillance missions, diplomats said Monday.

The U.S. planes have been overflying the troubled Yugoslav province for several weeks now at very high altitude, gathering intelligence on the movements of Serb troops and military hardware.

The planes fly in total safety at heights well out of range of Serb anti-aircraft defences.

At NATO headquarters here, the allies were Monday working on plans to set up integrated aerial reconnaissance missions with other NATO states to monitor Serbian compliance with the deal brokered by U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke last week.

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic agreed to withdraw Serb troops who have been fighting ethnic Albanian rebels in Kosovo and allow access for an independent surveillance force under the OSCE of 2,000 observers.

Besides the United States, member countries capable of joining the aerial reconnaissance missions are France, Germany, Britain and the Netherlands.

Other members could supply NATO missions with unmanned planes, or drones, equipped with cameras.

Before launching these unarmed flights over Kosovo, NATO has to receive final concrete guarantees from the Serbs that their anti-aircraft batteries have been deactivated.

It must also coordinate an exchange of liaison officers between Belgrade and the alliance's southern European aerial operations headquarters at Vicenza in Italy.

NATO will have to liaise with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is responsible for the observer force on the ground, and with Russia, which is demanding to take part in the NATO operations.

The alliance has a political interest in involving Russia in its mission, as Moscow was firmly opposed to military intervention in Kosovo, but its inclusion will depend on special procedures arising from the highly integrated and confidential nature of the flights, officials said.

Withdrawal of Serb security forces prompt rebel action in Kosovo

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — Separatist rebels in Kosovo have stepped up their attacks on police and reclaimed some of their positions following the pullout of several thousand Serb security forces from the province, Serb officials said Monday.

They attributed the increase in activities by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) to the recent accord reached between U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke and Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

The accord calls for Serb troops to pull out from the mainly ethnic Albanian province and for refugees to be allowed to return to their homes.

According to a high police official, "at least 5,000 policemen" have pulled out in recent days from Kosovo.

"KLA is trying to gain profit from this situation and retake control of the regions it has abandoned during the latest police counter-offensive," in September, the official said, under condition of anonymity.

Western reporters and diplomats reported seeing several police and military convoys leaving the province.

Journalists also reported seeing KLA fighters returning to numerous villages they had been forced to abandon, especially in the central Drenica region.

According to Serbian sources, the KLA was resuming its activities not only in Drenica, but also in other regions of Kosovo.

Kosovo Albanians have denied such reports and accuse Serb forces of pursuing their crackdown against the local population.

The Kosovo Albanian Information Centre (IKIC) reported during the weekend that Serbian forces shelled villages around Malisevo, southwest from Pristina, without mentioning if there were casualties in these attacks.

There was no information from the Albanian side about the fighting Monday.

In five days, the KLA has launched more than 40 attacks in which four policemen were killed and 12 were injured, Serb sources said.

Sunday, a reporter and photographer working for Yugoslavia's official news agency Tanjug disappeared in the region south from the capital Pristina. Two policemen had been reported wounded in an attack Saturday by KLA separatists in the same region.

A Serb police official said that the KLA, which has rejected the Holbrooke-Milosevic accord, was trying through its attacks "to provoke a police reaction" which could spark NATO air strikes against Serb targets.

Veljko Odalovic, the Serbian governor of the province, said the latest attacks "confirm that the international community has not yet realised that the terrorist gangs are against any peaceful solution... wanting to prevent by all means the application of the Milosevic-Holbrooke accord."

The deal calls for ground and aerial verification of the situation in the province, and for political negotiations over the future status of Kosovo to continue under U.S. mediation.

Non-combat NATO planes have started an aerial verification, but the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in charge of the ground situation, has just started preparations for a 2,000-strong mission.

An advance team of the OSCE experts arrived in Kosovo Saturday and Sunday to prepare the ground for the verification mission and a further 150 members are to arrive in Kosovo within the next two weeks.

WHO launches global strategy to combat cancer

LONDON (R) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) launched a bold campaign Monday to cut the scarring number of cancer cases that are expected to reach 20 million a year by 2020.

At an international conference of cancer experts in London, WHO said its new programme aimed to reduce new cases by a quarter by 2020 and to cut deaths from 10 million to six million a year.

"Our mission is to reduce the global incidence, morbidity and mortality from cancer," Professor Karol Sikora, the chief of the WHO Cancer Programme, told a news conference at the start of the meeting.

"We have to take a long-term strategic view," Cancer experts predict that by 2020, 70 per cent of new cancer patients will live in developing countries that between them have less than five per cent of the world's resources for cancer control.

WHO called for a greater partnership with professionals, governments and the private sector, particularly with food, drug biotechnology and insurance companies, to help it defeat the spread of the killer disease throughout the world.

"It's all about collaboration and partnerships," Sikora added.

The core of the Cancer Programme strategy is to develop effective national cancer programmes in each of the 191 member states of the United Nations. It plans to use existing resources and tailor the programmes to meet local educational, economic and cultural needs.

The strategies are aimed at cancer prevention, early detection, effective treatment and to provide palliative care for patients who need it. A cancer priority ladder will give developing nations a focus on which to base national control programmes.

"We could potentially prevent a quarter of all cancer simply by applying existing knowledge," said Sikora.

"A third (of cancers) are curable using today's technology and we expect this to rise to one half over the next 25 years.

But the appropriate expertise has to be at the right place at the right time and widely accessible. That's why we're calling for private sector involvement if such results are to be achieved." Tobacco products, diet and infections are the three main reversible causes of cancer that are responsible for 7.5 million of the 10 million new cases of cancer each year.

The WHO estimates that if people did not smoke and ate a sensible diet, which includes avoiding animal fat and eating more fibre, fresh fruit and vegetables and less meat, millions of cancer cases could be prevented.

"There is overwhelming evidence that nutrition plays a major role in cancer," Professor Paul Kleihues, the director of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in Lyons, France said.

Breast, colon and prostate cancers are the main malignant diseases linked to a high fat Western diet. Thirty per cent of these tumours are associated with eating habits.

The picture is different in poorer nations where an estimated 22 per cent of cancers have an infectious cause. But the WHO said lifestyle changes and vaccination programmes could have a major impact on the disease.

"We've seen an explosion in our understanding of the disease at a molecular level and are now poised to see some very significant advances in prevention, screening and treatment," said Sikora.

Death toll rises as storms whip southeastern Texas

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Floods and tornadoes brought a double whallop to central and southeast Texas, where at least 14 people died from weekend storms that deluged the area with more than a 30.5 cm of rain.

In many parts of San Antonio, roaring creeks and rivers carried away cars and mobile homes, inundated buildings and closed highways.

Pat Snow, his wife and three children took refuge after one-metre water forced them out of their home in Waller County outside Houston.

"We were trying to put things up and a floating tree hit the front door and broke it open," Snow said. "The water rushed in and started pushing all the furniture against the back wall."

As the wall began to crumble, Snow rushed his family up to the attic, broke a hole in the roof and scrambled out. They were rescued by boat, along with scores of others throughout southeast Texas Sunday.

Gov. George W. Bush planned to tour flood-ravaged San Antonio and surrounding regions Monday as the state prepared to apply for federal emergency assistance.

"My heart goes out to the many Texans who have been left homeless by this devastating," he said, adding that 275 National Guard troops were mobilised to assist flood victims.

One man died in a tornado that demolished mobile homes and snapped trees just after sunrise Sunday in Brookshire, about 55 kilometres west of Houston.

Three men and three women in San Antonio died after being swept away at low-water crossings. To the northeast in Comal County, a man was found dead in his car near a creek.

An 8-year-old girl was swept from a car in Pflugerville, northeast of Austin. Another man was killed when a tornado slammed into his mobile home near Chrismana, 350 kilometres northeast of San Antonio. Three people were reported drowned in Guadalupe County, east of San Antonio.

A 55-year-old man died of a heart attack while waiting to be rescued from floodwaters that stranded him at his house in New Braunfels.

And the toll could still rise: In Caldwell County, also northeast of San Antonio, officials were to resume their search Monday for two young children who were in a vehicle that washed off a road.

The Union Pacific rail line between Austin and San Antonio was washed out in at least 20 locations. Five people were injured when heavy rain stalled a medical evacuation plane and it crashed shortly after takeoff from Eagle Pass Municipal Airport early Sunday.

In Comal County, where the flooded Guadalupe River destroyed homes and businesses, authorities issued an overnight curfew Sunday after looters began picking through damaged property.

The American Red Cross set up emergency shelters throughout the San Antonio area with the capacity to hold 1,300 people.

Those who'd lost possessions but escaped with their lives were grateful. Rene Lujan was one of them, even though his home was devastated.

"My valuables were with me — my two daughters and my wife," Lujan said.

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No compensation enough

THE LAW is an ass, Charles Dickens once said. Indeed, that is why people who are held by the authorities but later found to be innocent cannot claim compensation. This is the case of Ma'an resident, Mohammad Awad, who was accused of killing Mohammad Kathi in the February riots. The court concluded that Awad confessed to a crime he did not commit because he "was held for four days before questioning." It also refuted and rejected with simple reasoning all other prosecution charges. This is not the first case in the recent history of the country in which young people have been subjected to months of imprisonment, questioning, trials and then sentenced, only later to be found not guilty by level-headed judges.

A case in point is the 1993 trial of five students from Mu'ta University who were accused of plotting to overthrow the regime. After months in jail, the State Security Court found the students guilty and sentenced three of them to death. Only after 15 agonising months did the Court of Cassation find the proceedings of the lower court to be faulty and declare the students to be innocent.

There is nothing that can compensate those young people for those lost months and lost careers. Surely nothing can compensate their parents for the suffering they had to endure during those months.

While we notice repeated attempts at reforming the judiciary and the court system, we should not fail to notice the so-called due process of the law, i.e. the process of prosecution, should itself be strengthened in a manner that will insure that fewer and fewer innocent people are put through the torture of being held, prosecuted, tried and sentenced. Officers and officials implicated in such cases must be reprimanded, at the very least. Procedures must be evaluated and revised each time a similar case occurs.

We have always prided ourselves with being a state of law and rightly so. But laws are not sacred. They should always be subject to scrutiny and updating.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Rai's Fahed Fanek commented on the dialogue between the government and the opposition parties and the chances of success. He ruled out the possibility that the dialogue would bring about differences between the government and the opposition parties in the Kingdom, as long as there is no democracy inside the parties itself. The opposition should agree amongst itself on certain political issues, and commit itself to accept the opinion of the majority, or talks with the government will be in vain, said Fanek. The government cannot make concessions on certain issues: the peace treaty with Israel, the electoral law and the press and publications law. The Islamists do not accept peace with Israel, and according to Fanek, this may pose a serious obstacle in successful talks with the government.

Al Dustour in its editorial slammed the Israeli daily newspaper, Yedioth Ahronot, for spreading rumours about the health of His Majesty King Hussein. The paper denied that the King is terminally ill and unable to resume his full duties as head of state as reported in the Israeli daily. The report aims at creating panic among Jordanians and causing instability in the country, but, the paper said, Jordan is immune to propaganda. All Jordanians are certain that the King is well and that he will come back safe and sound, said Al Dustour, and added that Jordanians fully trust the ability of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to lead the country while the King is abroad.

View from the Fourth Circle

A measure of Arab quality of life

Rami G. Khouri

HOW GOOD or bad are living conditions in Jordan? Indeed, can we combine material, social and psychological aspects of human well-being in measuring living standards? What are the links, if any, between living conditions, social culture, political participation, and Western-style modernisation?

Important contributions to this debate have been made this week with the publication by the Norwegian Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science of a book-length report on living conditions in Jordan. It is based on a comprehensive national survey of 6000 households throughout the country, conducted jointly with the Jordanian Department of Statistics in 1996 (with funding from the Norwegian and Canadian governments, and in cooperation with UNICEF).

The wealth of data obtained is organised by chapters on population, health, education, housing and infrastructure, household income and wealth, work, social networking, attitudes and public life, and children and youth. Despite this large amount of data, however, "there is no simple answer to the question how good or bad living conditions are in Jordan," according to Fafo international research director Jon Hanssen-Bauer, who is also one of the editors of the report (along with Jon Pedersen and Age A. Tilmes).

Most indicators are good and improving in Jordan, including life expectancy (70 years), infant mortality (28 deaths per 1000), household access to water (98%), school enrolment at age 16 (90%), and households with electricity (97%). Yet, problem areas include high unemployment (17%), low post-natal care (28%), some 27% of households have an annual income of less than JD1450 (or JD121 per month), about 19% of households with children aged below five have at least one child suffering from malnutrition, and one in five households is crowded (over three persons per room). Hundreds of other indicators make compelling reading. Hanssen-Bauer told me: "In sum, the report paints a varied, but perhaps fairly rosy picture of Jordan, rosier perhaps than many would expect." In

part this is because the survey took a snapshot of the entire population, and did not focus exclusively on the poor and the marginalised.

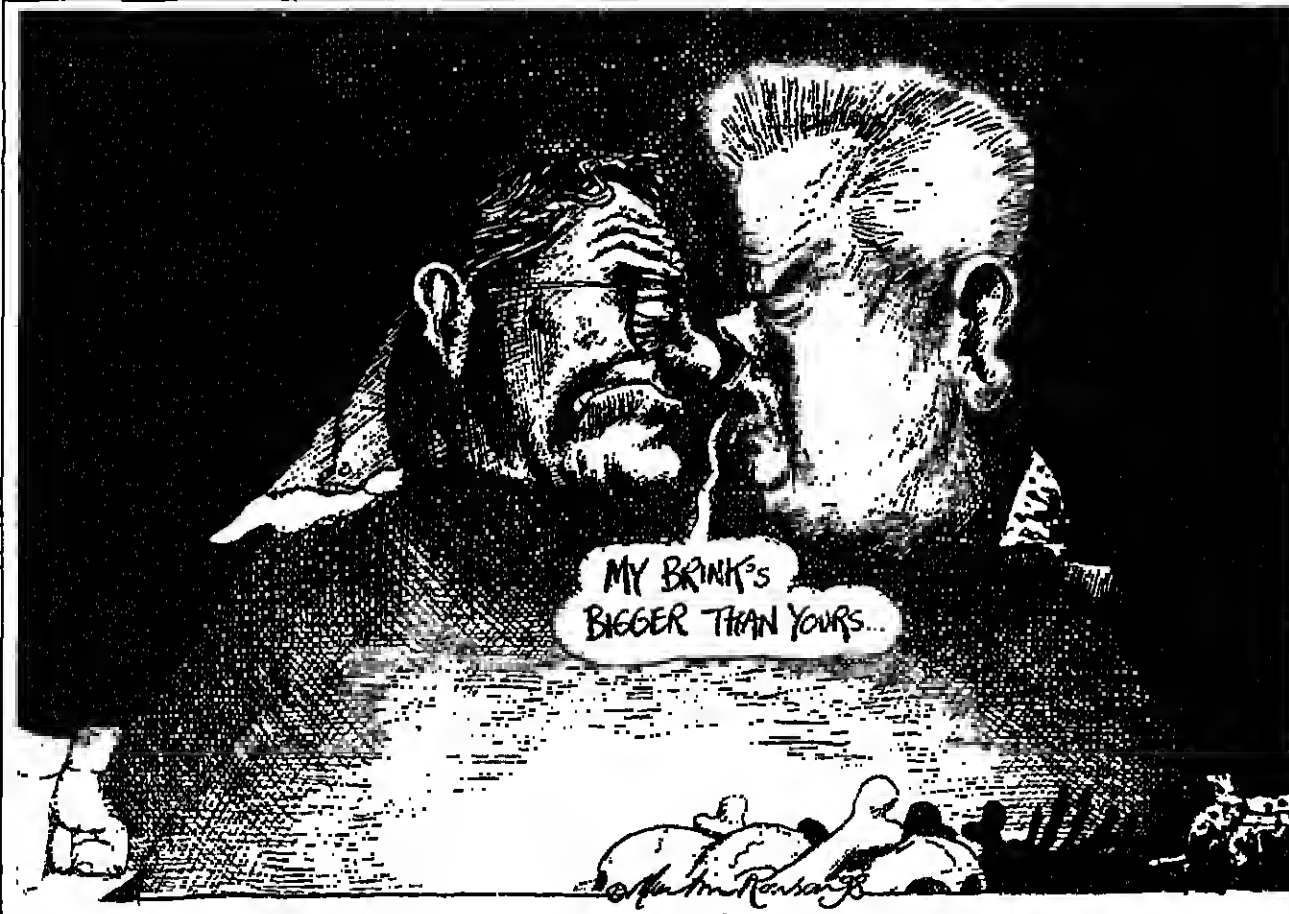
This and other studies find that income inequality in Jordan is similar to other Arab countries, and is more egalitarian than Africa and Latin America. Jordan is in a peculiar situation in which "comparatively good access to public services, housing and infrastructure may well be combined with low income," the report says. Hanssen-Bauer elaborates by noting that the data shows that "the basic needs of Jordanians have been satisfied to a large extent, but a large share of this needs satisfaction has been achieved either by government transfers that exceed the long term capability of the government given the current economic climate, or through remittances from relatives abroad. In a situation where those sources are strained, a great many Jordanians suffer from income shortfalls." In other words, as I interpret the report, we've done rather well to date in terms of meeting human needs (thanks to what the report calls the government's "redistributive social formation," which spends heavily on health and education); but political and economic trends make it unlikely that we can continue to improve living conditions on the basis of the same old policies, and instead new strategies are required to maintain economic expansion and quality of life gains. The second fascinating dimension of the report is its attempt to determine how "family and social networks" impact on household living conditions. The survey found that three-quarters of Jordanian households live surrounded by relatives within close distance; 85% of interviewees had visited with relatives during the previous two weeks; and money transfers from relatives are among the top three income sources for 14% of households — the same percentage as households for whom retirement pensions and social security payments from the government are leading income sources.

Financial and other practical assistance from family and relatives "form an important part of the social security sys-

tem and safety net for the Jordanian population... and are an important part of coping strategies," the report found. Integrating the wider family/tribal unit in Jordan into quality of life measures can give us a more accurate picture of personal or household well-being, while reducing the weaknesses of traditional Western measures that primarily count financial income as the key determinant of quality of life. The report also offers pioneering information on people's attitudes to political participation (15% of men and 9% of women have been involved in election campaigns); women in public life (one-third of interviewees oppose women in government, parliament or elected local councils); mass media news sources (68% of adults watch Jordan television news, 20% also watch non-Jordanian Arab television news, and 15% watch Israeli TV news); and "tradition and modernity" (Jordan is not "developing into a copy of modernised Western societies," but rather "is taking its own specific path toward modernity," as can be seen in how traditional kinship groups like family and tribe impact on political organisation). "The analysis finds no support for a contention that there is a simple relation between position of women, Islam, and modernisation in a Western direction as often posited — at least in the Western press," the report notes.

This valuable study will be analysed for years, thanks to its impressive methodology, comprehensive perspective, and enlightening findings. It challenges us to continue developing sophisticated means of analysing and documenting ourselves and trends of our world, so that we will not have to perpetually endure politically preconceived notions that often masquerade as fact in developing societies.

Fafo and the Department of Statistics are to be congratulated for a fine piece of work, and for opening a conceptual door that others — especially Jordanians and other Arabs — must now walk through and expand.



Pinochet: Arrogance, stupidity, and nemesis

By Gwynne Dyer

LIKE MANY retired mass murderers, former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet thought he was untouchable. Now he is under arrest, and with a bit of luck he will die in jail. He wasn't always so stupid, but it has been so long since anybody dared to defy him that he forgot he was only human.

When Pinochet finally retired as commander-in-chief of the Chilean armed forces last March at the tender age of 82, he lost his ability to threaten the Chilean state directly, but he still thought he was invulnerable. And within Chile, he was. Before ceding power to a civilian government in 1990, he took the precaution of proclaiming an amnesty for all crimes committed during his 17 years in power, including the murders of 3,197 political opponents who were tortured to death during his term and 1,102 other people who "simply disappeared after being arrested by his secret police."

Just to be sure, Pinochet kept direct control of the army until this year, and even after his official retirement he retained the power to overawe the elected government of Prime Minister Eduardo Frei. Since he had run the army for 25 years and personally approved the promotions of every serving Chilean officer above the rank of captain, the government did not dare to take action against him for fear of the army's reaction.

Pinochet thought he had fixed matters on the foreign front, too. A constitutional amendment he pushed through in 1980 assured him the post of senator-for-life after his retirement from the army, and all members of Chile's two houses of parliament traditionally get diplomatic passports. In his simple-minded way, Pinochet believed that that gave him immunity abroad as well.

He was, of course, careful not to travel to countries where there were large numbers of people who were related to those he had killed, but he thought Britain was safe. After all, during the long period of Conservative rule that ended only last year

he had been a major customer of the British arms industry and a frequent visitor, regularly flying into British Aerospace's airfields and even having tea with former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

He didn't go to the United States, which has long since repudiated the support that the Nixon administration gave to his 1973 coup — and would like to talk to him about the car bomb that his agents planted to kill a former Chilean ambassador to the U.S. and his American aide right in the centre of Washington's diplomatic quarter in 1976. But then, Pinochet didn't really like the U.S. anyway, dismissing Americans as "rude."

Pinochet was a snob, and what he loved most was swanning around London visiting all the places that rich tourists go to shop or to lunch: Burberry's, the River Cafe, Fortnum & Mason's, England. He told 'New Yorker' magazine recently, "the ideal place to live" because of its civility, moderation, and respect for rules. He didn't even notice that Britain got a new government last year with a somewhat more robust definition of civility and respect for rules.

So he blithely arrived in London last month and checked into a five-star hotel in Park Lane for a spot of up-market tourism. After Jon Lee Anderson interviewed him for the 'New Yorker', Pinochet "set off to Madame Tussaud's for the umpteenth time; the British National Army Museum; and then to lunch at Fortnum & Mason's." Early this month, he checked into the private London Clinic for a minor back operation on a herniated disc.

And then the Metropolitan Police showed up at the London Clinic on Friday night and arrested him. Formally, they were simply responding to an extradition request from a Spanish judge accusing him of genocide and terrorism — but that is just the public face of the affair. If the British government had not wanted him arrested, he would have been warned and allowed to escape.

Arrogance makes people stupid. Pinochet did not realise that a diplomatic

passport does not confer immunity from arrest, under British law, unless the holder is actually a head of state or a diplomat formally accredited to the British government. Nor did he pay any heed to the fact that the Labour government of Prime Minister Tony Blair has a different policy on human rights violations than his Conservative predecessors.

The British government, having allowed Pinochet to enter, could not easily arrest him of its own volition — but it could certainly respond to the request of a Spanish court investigating the murder of hundreds of Spanish citizens in the "southern cone" of South America at the height of the Argentine, Chilean and Uruguayan military dictatorships in the 70s and early 80s.

Now everybody is pretending that it is simply a matter for the courts. The Chilean government, which is always looking over its shoulder at an army full of Pinochet loyalists, lodged a formal protest at his arrest. But a spokesman for British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook replied that "this was entirely a judicial matter, and the government has no power to intervene."

Chilean Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza coyly agreed: "The British government is as removed as we are from the (extradition) judge's decision. Just like in Chile, (British) justice is absolutely autonomous." So the Spanish court now has 40 days to make its case for extraditing Pinochet to Spain for trial — unless friends of his British victims manage to bring a case against him in the British courts first.

Either way, he is unlikely to see Chile again, which will make Chile's government quietly grateful despite its public protests. This is a man whose secret police used to train dogs to violate women prisoners, but he still has backers in Chile, so a foreign jail is the ideal place for him to spend the rest of his life.

It is also, perhaps, a small sign that the rule of law is making progress in the world.

The writer is a London-based journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.

Do we stand a chance in agriculture?

This is part one of a three part series examining Jordan's agricultural prospects.

Khairuddin Shukri is the Chairman of Jordan's Exporters and Producers Association for Fruit and Vegetables.

FARMING, in general, and agricultural production and exports in particular, has been written about almost every day in Arabic newspapers over the past four months. I have read columns which mostly proved, in my opinion, that cheap popularity is more important than accurate reporting.

As the chairman of the Jordan Exporters and Producers Association for Fruit and Vegetables (JEPAFV), I am duty-bound to write about what is happening in this field, and to try to make the readers aware of the facts as they are, and the way we, as an association, hopes to deal with them. Over the next few days, I will contribute a series of articles for those who are interested in reading about the current constraints for our agriculture production and how they should be dealt with.

Modern agriculture does not fit well into theories, pretty vocabularies, or expressions. It is a highly technical and specific scientific field which, if approached professionally, can change a country. This happened to Chile when, over a period of ten years, they increased their exports ten fold. I see no reason why we can't. It takes sincere, collective efforts from both the private and the public sector to bring about a plan with a timetable to achieve such goals.

Government spending on infrastructure in the Jordan Valley has been substantial (JD1 billion) since the 1950s. The private sector has invested heavily in that area as well. However, when we look at the total returns from fresh produce exports — JD70 million — from both the highlands and the Valley, it does not take an expert to see that something is wrong. In 1989 Jordan exported

567,108 tonnes of fruits and vegetables worth JD147 million. In 1997 the exports dropped to 355,782 tonnes worth a little over JD70 million. Why did this happen? And will it get worse?

In my 20 years as a farmer in the Valley and 18 years as an exporter to Europe, the only constant I have seen is change. If you do not follow trends or even anticipate them, you will be left far behind. We relied heavily on the Gulf market, thinking that it would last forever. It didn't. It was not only the Gulf war that caused the decline in demand for Jordanian produce; rather the reason was that most of these oil-rich countries are now using high tech agricultural production methods to grow their own produce. Saudi Arabia, which absorbed 216,100 tonnes in 1989 out of a total of 567,106 tonnes exported that same year, is a prime example: this year the total Saudi exports is 26,937 tonnes.

The near collapse of fresh produce domestic prices since the Gulf war is attributed to the loss of our major traditional markets. A marketing strategy based on diversification of export markets is a must. So far, this has been done at a very small scale by individual private sector efforts. To be successful in implementing such strategies on a large scale, we need the devoted efforts of all concerned parties namely the AMO, the ministries of agriculture, trade and industry, transportation, planning, and the Jordan Valley Authority. All these parties' efforts combined with the private sector's can form the links that form the chain that runs from the producer to the consumer.

The mouse that ate Western civilisation

By Gilbert Adair

ONE OF THE longest-running and most popular TV programmes in Britain during the single-channel, black-and-white Fifties was a panel game entitled *What's My Line?* Into the studios would troop once a week three or four guests whose trades or professions had to be guessed ("Could you perform this service on me?" — cue gales of studio laughter) by a resident quartet of panelists. Even way back then, however, celebrity was enhanced by its own unique prestige, and the most eagerly awaited part of the evening was the self-styled "Celebrity Spot." The panelists put on masks, a notability was invited by the chairman to sign in and the idea was to figure out his or her identity.

Just the sight of these celebrities entering the studio would provoke a spontaneous round of applause. But I recall one guest, a man in his late middle age, with the silver-frosted temples, circumflex-shaped moustache and complacently affluent demeanour of a small-town banker from the American Midwest, whose entrance was accompanied by a sulkily baffled silence. It was only after he had scribbled his signature on the *What's My Line?* blackboard that there arose a quite tremendous burst of cheering. It was Walt Disney.

What must now strike the under-thirties generation as weird is less the fact that, 40 years ago, this world-famous film-maker was not yet a household name than that there really once was a person named Walt Disney. Nowadays the word "Disney" resonates in the collective imagination as a corporation, a culture, an ideology, an industry, a philosophy, a trademark... but a man? It would be like discovering that there had actually once existed a Mr. Coca and a Mr. Pepsi.

Even weirder, from our millennial vantage point, is the idea that Walt was not only a living individual, but also an artist, one of the 20th century's supreme inventors of forms, whose early shorts, of an often amazingly subversive rudeness and violence, were championed by such unlikely admirers as Einstein and Eisenstein.

Weirdest of all, perhaps, is that the Disney of those halcyon years, before his family ramshackle cottage industry ballooned into

the tentacularly ubiquitous operation it is now, could also be described as an artisan — an artisan of genius. The earliest of his feature-length cartoons, *Snow White*, *Dumbo*, *Pocahontas* and *Bambi*, masterpieces all, were constructed cel by exquisite cel, image by image, like the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Taking years to complete, they cost a fortune; nor was it by any means a foregone conclusion that so massive an investment in time and money would be recouped.

So it would be a mistake to measure the artistry of Disney by the slick syntheses of *The Lion King* or *Pocahontas* or the new *Mulan*. The computer-generated creatures of these cartoons bear precisely the same relation to the painstakingly hand-crafted denizens of the works cited above as the animatronics of Disney's theme parks do to real animals.

The thing about Disney is that he used to be exceptional, a treat reserved for extra-special occasions, champagne for kids. Hard as it is to credit now, with a new one opening annually, a full-length Disney cartoon was, for the infants of my generation, a major event, anticipated for months, even years, ahead, read about, fantasised about, endlessly pawed over afterwards. It would generally be released at Christmas — and, in a sense, it was better than Christmas, as Christmas came but once a year but a Disney film came but once every two or three years.

Then I grew up — and, I like to believe, I grew out of Disney. But an odd thing happened. The world had grown into Disney. Think of confectionery — I mean the sort of ordinary, humble sweets stocked by corner shops. Just as there exist what could be regarded as "grown-up" sweets (coffee creams, for example, or chocolate liqueurs) and other varieties specifically targeted at children (dolly mixtures, jelly babies, etc.), so, when I was a child, there were Disney movies and there were grown-up movies. Yes, it's true, the grown-ups who accompanied us to the Disneyesque enjoyed them nearly as much as we did. They were meticulously detailed, excitingly plotted, vividly characterised and boasted sound-track scores so catchy that some of their best-known theme songs have endured to this day as popular standards — "Whistle While You Work"

in *Snow White*, "When You Wish Upon a Star" in *Pocahontas*. Yet, as everybody realised, they were basically children's sweets, and it would have been as inconceivable for a grown-up that era to think of going to see one unaccompanied by an infant as it would have been to buy dolly mixtures for his or her own consumption.

Now, apparently, we all prefer dolly mixtures. Not only is *Mulan* a perfectly acceptable option for anybody wanting

mitted to degenerate into candy, and not just candy but candy floss, forgotten as soon as consumed, disintegrating into sugary nothingness even as one consumes it.

It seems to me that it all began with the notion of the theme park, in particular with the original Disneyland, erected in Anaheim, California, near Los Angeles, in 1955. Much has since been written about the internationally flourishing theme-park industry, and

friction. It's neither subtle nor elusive but instantaneous and universal. And the illusion of danger is so cunningly calibrated that, far from undermining our pleasure, it becomes one of its most indispensable ingredients. You can see for yourself if you visit one of the Disney theme parks. It would be hard to imagine any other public entertainment where the sheer euphoria of the experience is so visibly stamped on every face.

The trouble is that, for a certain mentality, the theme park ride has become the model, the paradigm, for all cultural pleasures. If a movie doesn't have you squealing with delight the way a theme-park ride does, if its meaning has to be gradually, effortfully, "drawn out," as they say of the fastidious flavours of haute cuisine, then, admit it, you're really just pretending to enjoy it. That, at least, is what more and more people believe, and that's why more and more movies are conceived as vicarious or, to employ a modish word, virtual theme-park rides (a recent specimen, *Twister*, even sounded like one).

Yes, but wait, some may retort, take precisely *Mulan*. Because it features a female protagonist resolved to liberate a space for herself in a male-dominated world, couldn't it be called a proto-feminist cartoon? And *Pocahontas*, after all, managed to address the hardly infantile issues of racism, colonialism and even genocide. Then there's *Scoreless*. And *Coppola*. And *Tarantino*. And *Spielberg* — well, maybe not the *Spielberg* of *Jurassic Park*, but let's not forget *Schindler's List* and *Saving Private Ryan*. Surely not everything in Disney, and by extension in the modern Hollywood cinema, deserves to be so contemptuously dismissed as infantile.

The politicisation of the cartoon? The radicalisation of American mainstream movies? A lovely idea if it were true, but it isn't. *Mulan* and *Pocahontas* are just confirmation, if confirmation were needed, that "serious," "controversial" subject matter now has to be rendered instantly palatable, frictionless, resistance-free, masticated and diced into minuscule bite-sized (or sound-bite-sized) chunks until it's pap for the toothless, just as McDonald's does everything but chew the food for you. *Schindler's List*? As one sceptic

cal American critic put it, only Spielberg could have made a feel good movie about the Holocaust, *Saving Private Ryan*? Squinting dollops of blood over the screen like a child smothering a Big Mac in ketchup can't disguise the fact — indeed, it simply underlines it — that, essentially, that is what it is, a Big Mac, a Big Steve, a real *Spielburger*. The blood, like the ketchup, is crucial. Without it, the movie wouldn't have any taste at all.

Actually, the fast-food analogy is even more apposite than that of the theme-park ride. Just as children tend to turn their noses up at anything but Big Macs and fishfingers, so grown-up audiences are increasingly fighting shy of any film — and there are few enough — with an authentic seriousness of purpose. Which in turn means that the function of critics is no longer that, as used to be true, of distinguishing between good cinema and bad cinema, but of distinguishing between good pap (*Lethal Weapon*) and bad pap (*Godzilla*). And the same audiences that would formerly have queued for Bergman, Bunuel, Bresson, Fellini, Visconti and Antonioni now make a beeline for the latest Bruce Willis or *There's Something About Mary* or *Mulan*. They're tired, they've had a stressful week, the Sokurov sounds grim, the Rivette lasts three hours, maybe *Six Days, Seven Nights* isn't as terrible as all that, anyhow it might be fun. As much fun as a theme-park ride, as a Big Mac.

I fear that the Disneyfication of the cinema is now irreversible. Think of a few of the massive commercial successes of the last decade: movies about children (*Home Alone*), about children in adults' bodies (*Big*), about "the inner child" lurking in all of us (virtually anything with Robin Williams), about babies (*Look Who's Talking*), about toys (*Toy Story*), about cute, cuddly animals (*Babe*) and now even about cute, cuddly insects (the forthcoming *Antz*). It used to seem an amusing anomaly of the language that the expression "adult movie" referred exclusively to pornography. One day, however, it may be no joke. It may be that a genuinely adult movie, should such a species manage to survive this insidious process of infantilisation, will literally be regarded as belonging to a new category of pornography — not of the body but of the mind.

— The Independent



to catch a movie and confronted by a typical multiplex menu, but it's probably the case that the vast majority of other movies, on offer have also been contaminated by the infantilising Disney ethos. The old can phrase, beloved of publicists, about a movie being "a treat for all children from six to 60" must now be read absolutely literally, for that's exactly how the contemporary (American) cinema views its potential audience — as children, however old.

How did it happen? How did it happen that, these days, watching a movie is closer to the experience of being whizzed round a theme-park ride than to reading a novel or watching a play or listening to an opera? How did it happen that the cinema, the century's quintessential art form, has been per-

the term itself has become a metaphor for the world's growing preference for an anti-septic simulacrum of society, a society emancipated of its endemic afflictions of poverty, racism, unemployment, violence and dirt, as against the real, messy, uncontrollable thing. Yet what all such commentaries neglect is the importance of that key signifier of the theme-park experience, the ride.

Everybody likes rides — this is the fundamental tenet of the Disney cultism. Rides offer a visceral, sensual pleasure that makes no distinction between age, intellect, gender or race. It's a pleasure that presupposes no fore-knowledge, no mental cultivation, no skills of any kind. It offers no resistance, no

Environment

Arctic 12 seek better life for those in the cold

Delegations from eight countries have just held a meeting near the North Pole. Their aim: To work out how people living in remote regions inside the Arctic Circle can be given some benefits of modern living while retaining the environment, languages and the traditional way of life. Gemini News Service reports

By Clyde Sanger

TO MOST people the Arctic remains a forbidding region of treacherous ice and hostile weather. It is best left to a few explorers with odd ideas of adventure. It is often thought. Indeed, even penguins don't choose to live.

So why did four foreign ministers, led by Canada's Lloyd Axworthy, and delegations from eight countries, as well as people from agencies like the World Wide Fund for Nature, fly up in mid-September to Iqaluit, a small town 63 degrees north of the equator on Baffin Island?

Certainly, Iqaluit has no distinguished history. It used to be called Frobisher Bay, after the Elizabethan adventurer Sir Martin Frobisher who was trying to find a way to sail through to China in 1576-78, and brought back to England two Eskimos and 1,350 tonnes of worthless rock that he thought contained gold. In English, Iqaluit appropriately means "difficult landing."

Axworthy and his companions were hardly as naive as Frobisher. Their hopes, through the Arctic Council they were representing, are not set on gold so much as a careful programme of sustainable development that does not harm the fragile environment.

They are also concerned to work alongside the native people to preserve their languages and traditional way of life, while offering them some benefits of modern living. The Arctic Council, as chief American delegate Wendy Sherman said, is "a quite unique animal and needs a special structure."

It was created in Ottawa in 1996 as a forum for the eight Arctic states — Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark/Greenland, Norway and Iceland as well as Canada and the United States.

Its main aim has been to plan cooperation in fighting pollution in the Arctic and saving its wildlife while opening up possibilities such as university training in their own circumpolar region for northerners.

What makes it unique is that the heads of four indigenous groups — the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Saami Council, the Alaska-based Aleut International Association and a Russian association of 30 northern peoples — sit alongside government officials as Permanent Participants.

The Council works by consensus, which means that these groups have (theoretically, at least) equal say with Russia or the United States.

A small secretariat rotates every two years, Canada having been the first to run it. Arctic cooperation has several origins. Some date it to the Murmansk speech made in 1989 by Mikhail Gorbachev, when he called for the Arctic to become "a zone of peace."

But the United States has not wanted military security to be an agenda issue, and in 1991 the eight governments met in Finland and adopted the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS).

Under it four working groups have produced useful scientific studies on tiny budgets. Since 1996 the AEPS and the working groups have been the practical arm of the Arctic Council.

At the Iqaluit meeting some delegates and observers voiced impatience that the Senior Arctic Officials, who have met nine times, had spent much of the Council's first two years in working out rules of procedure for this "special structure."

A main difficulty has been to agree on a formula for funding the working groups. While seven governments would adopt an overall formula to fund the council and through it the working groups on a multi-year basis, the U.S. has insisted that each project be separately approved and supported.

The projects agreed at Iqaluit are fine in themselves. For example, Canada proposed one focusing on the health of children, and (through the U.S.) the Alaska state government put three proposals on telemedicine, ecotourism and sharing technology on sanitation systems.

The working groups themselves have produced plans to contain oil spills, save seabirds, and reduce pollution from land-based sources. They have also tracked pollutants from outside the Arctic that contaminate "country food" which northerners obtain by hunting, trapping and fishing.

But funding project-by-project has meant, as a British Foreign and Commonwealth Office observer Neil Gilbert complained, creating pieces of a jigsaw puzzle without a unified picture. He and others

called for an over-arching strategy for sustainable development.

Will this happen, now that the U.S. has taken over the chair and will run the secretariat until the year 2000? Washington has shown it prefers to do things bilaterally. It has been giving Russia technical assistance in managing PCB wastes and, Ambassador Sherman added, is cooperating with Russia on "a prototype vessel for sealot and storing nuclear waste."

It was a gamble to put the United States in the chair, and it was done in the hope that Washington would become more engaged in Arctic cooperation. Perhaps this will happen with a push from Alaskan officials.

Meanwhile, other governments are funding and pursuing some exciting initiatives. Among them, Finland is leading on plans for a university of the Arctic, a "university without walls," which will link existing colleges and provide a curriculum that takes full account of indigenous cultures.

— Gemini News

Asia-Pacific countries vow to protect environment

By Michael Tighe
Associated Press

DECLARING THAT the health of their economies depends on the health of their oceans, 17 Asia-Pacific countries agreed to curb coastal pollution, sustain fish stocks and share research into global climate change.

Members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum — including the United States, Japan, China and Mexico — also agreed last week to coordinate aquaculture efforts, halt the use of cyanide and dynamite to catch fish and compile an inventory of fishing vessels plying their waters.

This is the first time APEC, which accounts for half of the world's trade, has drafted a specific plan for ocean issues. The sea is responsible for nine per cent of the region's economy.

"We know the economies of the APEC region are dependent on the ocean for food, raw materials and recreation revenues," said D. James Baker, head of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and chair of the

APEC Oceans Conference.

"This agreement brings us one step closer to ensuring a sustainable fishery, more viable natural resource and a healthier coastal zone," Friday's agreement will be presented to the APEC heads of state for their approval at next month's summit in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur. U.S. President Bill Clinton is scheduled to attend.

The APEC declaration also previews the April meeting of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, which will focus on oceans issues.

"The essential underlying message that we have is that when you're in difficult times, as we are now in difficult times, you forget the now in difficult times, you forget the concepts of sustainable development at your peril," said New Zealand's Bill Mansfield, special representative of the U.N. commission chairman.

The oceans declaration comes a month after APEC leaders failed to negotiate a trade pact for the region, partly because of oceans issues. One sticking point was Japan's refusal to open its fisheries to foreign competition.

Japanese officials here refused to comment on those discussions.

On Friday, APEC officials reaffirmed their commitment to implement the 1995 global agreement on curbing land-based pollution from farming, sewage treatment, urbanisation and industries such as logging and mining.

Such pollution runs off into coastal waters, killing marine life and even the waters themselves.

"This problem of changing ocean chemistry is one of the most serious environmental problems we face," Baker said. "The input of nutrients or persistent toxic chemicals has altered some coastal and marine waters so much they have become more susceptible to harmful algal blooms, fish kills and oxygen depletion."

One such algal bloom is red tide, a microscopic organism that colours the sea and can be toxic to humans and marine life. It is suspected of killing pearl oysters in Japan, manatees and dolphins in the United States, sea turtles off Mexico and farm fish in Hong Kong.

Forum participants agreed to identify their pollution problems, exchange information on managing

them and identify sources of funding for possible solutions.

"In any area of activity related to the ocean it will become more and more important for us that such activity should be based on the newest available information or knowledge," said Masakazu Murakami, director of the Ocean and Earth Division of Japan's Science and Technology Agency.

Countries also agreed to cooperate on ensuring the viability of world fisheries. The world ocean catch is valued at about \$80 billion a year, and aquaculture adds another \$42 billion.

Fisheries employ about 200 million people worldwide.

APEC nations said they would aggressively implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries adopted by the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation. The code aims to minimise fisheries' impacts on stocks, ecosystems and cultures.

The nations also declared they would work with FAO on reducing the incidental killing of seabirds, protecting sharks and easing pressure on fish stocks.

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Jordan's trade deficit narrows by 2.9 per cent

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — The Kingdom's deficit in the balance of trade during the past seven months declined by 2.9 per cent compared to 10.8 per cent during the same period of 1997, the Central Bank of Jordan's (CBJ's) monthly report indicated Sunday.

The CBJ's report for monetary and trade activities during the first seven months of this year showed the deficit amounted to JD878.8 million compared to JD904.9 million for the same period of last year, a 6.5 per cent decline.

The bulletin showed that Jordan's imports during the same period amounted to JD1.57 billion compared to JD1.64 billion in the previous year, a 4.5 per cent drop.

The report did not specify the reasons behind the decline in Jordan imports and exports in the current year.

The bulletin, which was made available to the Jordan Times, showed that Arab countries' share of the Kingdom's foreign exports amounted to 45 per cent, or JD256.2 million, followed by the European Union (EU) which accounted for seven per cent, or JD39.4 million. The remaining 48 per cent

were spread among other countries.

While Jordan imports from Arab states amounted to 20 per cent, or JD316.8 million, imports from EU states accounted for 34 per cent, or JD528.1 million and other countries for the remaining 46 per cent, the bulletin said.

Iraq ranked first among the countries that bought Jordanian products during the first seven months of the current year with a total of JD57.6 million followed by Saudi Arabia with JD56.5 million and India JD54.4 million.

Germany topped the list as Jordan's imports from this country amounted to JD156.4 million followed by imports from Iraq at JD147 million, the U.S. (JD142.1 million). Japan ranked first among the Asian countries as Jordan purchased JD85 million from this country.

The Kingdom's exports of raw materials and intermediate goods totalled JD301.1 million followed by reexported products for a total of JD122.7 million and capital goods for JD42.9 million.

The bulk of Jordan's imports were mostly raw and intermediate goods which amounted to JD804.9 million followed by consumer goods, JD417.1 million, and capital goods worth JD346.5 million.

Israel says economy will grow just 1.6% in 1998

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's economy will grow 1.6 per cent this year, slowing from 1997's 2.2 per cent and marking the smallest increase since 1989, the Central Bureau of Statistics said in a preliminary estimate released Monday.

It said per capita income would reach 61,000 shekels — about \$14,600 at current exchange rates — marking the second year it had declined by 0.5 per cent.

The slow increase this year in gross domestic product (GDP) reflects a six per cent decline in investment and slow growth in merchandise and service exports (three per cent this year compared with seven per cent last year), the bureau said.

It said those factors were partly offset by an expected 3.6 per cent increase in private consumption and a pick-up in public consumption growth to 2.2 per cent from about 1.4 per cent in 1997.

The bureau said the estimates were based on final figures for the first six and nine months of the year and estimates for the rest of the year.

Business sector GDP is expected to expand about one per cent the bureau said, following rises of about two per cent in 1997 and five per cent in 1996.

It said Israel's trade deficit, not counting defence equipment, would narrow to \$7.9 billion from \$9.5 billion in 1997 due mainly to improved terms of trade.

"In contrast, there will not be a further decline in the government's deficit; according to partial figures for 1998, the public sector deficit will rise to 2.5 per cent of GDP from 1.7 per cent in 1997," the bureau indicated.

Private saving rates would decline to seven per cent of disposable income from eight per cent in 1997. The bureau said it expected

the unemployment rate to rise to an average of 9.0 per cent this year from 7.7 per cent in 1997 and 6.7 per cent in 1996. Labour demand would grow by just one per cent, versus two per cent in 1997 and four per cent in 1996.

After six years of break-neck growth, Israel's economy began slowing in the middle of 1996 under the weight of tighter monetary and fiscal policy and a slowdown in immigration. A wave of immigrants from the former Soviet Union had propelled growth in the first half of the decade to annual rates of 6-7 per cent.

The government is officially projecting growth to pick up to 2.5 per cent next year. But many private sector economists have begun to warn that a slowing world economy may undermine even that mild recovery.

For the first half of 1998, the bureau revised upward its estimate for GDP growth to 1.9 per cent from a previous 1.7 per cent.

Meanwhile, Israeli Finance Minister Yaacov Neeman said Monday he saw only a limited inflationary impact from the shekel's recent slide against the dollar.

"Most of the depreciation's impact on the economy will be positive... As long as some of the depreciation is real, price rises are limited," Neeman told a session of the parliamentary finance committee called to discuss the exchange rate.

The shekel, which has been weakening steadily against the dollar since early August, dropped sharply in the first week of October. It has since partly recovered and was trading at about 4.23 to the dollar on Monday afternoon.

The weaker shekel has already begun to raise inflation. The September consumer price index shot up 1.4 per cent and is expected

to reach 2.5 per cent or more in October.

But Neeman said the sluggish economy precluded a big inflationary hit.

"With reduced demand, there's no doubt that only part of the depreciation will be seen in an increase in prices," he said. "Part of the depreciation will remain in the form of a real depreciation, and this will certainly help exporters."

Neeman said that the expected slowdown in world economic growth would hurt Israel exports, but he said the impact would be moderate. Two weeks ago, Neeman said Israel would keep to the government's forecast 2.5 per cent growth projection for 1999.

"The effect here is expected to be far less than in other emerging markets," he said.

Neeman forecast external debt would remain at 27 per cent of GDP this year, the same as in 1997. Israel's current account deficit, he added, would fall to \$1.92 billion this year from \$3.2 billion 1997.

Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, who also spoke to the parliamentary committee, said he saw no indications that overseas investors would be liquidating Israeli assets as they are doing elsewhere in the world.

"So far, there are no significant signs of that happening here," he said.

Frenkel told Army Radio that the bank remained adverse to intervening in the foreign currency market. "The Bank of Israel, as a matter of strategy, has no desire or need to intervene in the foreign currency markets," he said.

More than 44 million Russians now below the poverty line

MOSCOW (AP) — More than 44 million Russians, or 30 per cent of the entire country, now live below the poverty line and the economic crisis appears likely to push the numbers even higher, according to government figures released Monday.

The Russian economy has been in a free fall for the past two months, and a rash of statistics released Monday indicated that living standards have slipped even further than previously believed.

Perhaps the most telling figure was the increase in poverty.

The number of Russians living in poverty has risen to 44.3 million, up from 31 million last year, the State Statistics Committee said.

The government puts the poverty line at a meager 552 rubles (\$32) a month.

Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov's government is still working on an economic programme to combat the crisis, but it has few resources to work with and

the numbers are looking worse by the month.

Russia's gross domestic product was down a staggering 9.9 per cent in September compared to a year ago, the statistics committee said. Officials had recently predicted that the gross domestic product would only drop about five per cent for the year, but it now appears the fall will be much steeper.

Meanwhile, the Russian currency tumbled again Monday, dropping to 17.1 rubles to the dollar, down from 15.5 rubles Friday. The ruble was at about six to the dollar before it collapsed in August.

There was at least one piece of good news Monday — tax collections appear to be rising this month after falling in the aftermath of the crisis, tax chief Georgy Boos said.

The government has been unable to meet its tax collection goals for years, and the economic turmoil has crippled Russia's banking system and made matters

worse. The government collected 12 billion rubles (\$700 million) in taxes in August, but only 9.3 billion rubles (\$544 million) last month. Tax collection is picking up this month, Boos said, without giving any figures.

The new government has said it wants to streamline the country's unwieldy tax system and lower some taxes to encourage more people to pay.

But in its quest for more money, the government is showing an inclination to introduce new taxes and raise existing ones.

Boos said Monday that the government plans to introduce a 10 per cent sales tax on some categories of goods, which he didn't specify. The government has previously allowed regional authorities to independently impose sales taxes of up to five per cent.

Critics of new taxes say rates are already too high for the ailing economy and only encourage widespread tax-dodging.

Argentina feted, held up as best pupil in IMF class

BUENOS AIRES (R) — When the IMF tells a country taking its bitter medicine that it is an example to others, indeed, that it "has a story to tell the world," something must be up.

That is what has happened to Argentina over the last two weeks, with the austerity-preaching International Monetary Fund (IMF) fetting the country like never before.

IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus said Argentina's story is one of "the importance of fiscal discipline, structural change and monetary policy rigorously applied."

The IMF issued an upbeat statement on a review of Argentina's progress on a voluntary three-year, \$2.8 billion loan agreement with the fund.

"The review found that all applicable quantitative performance criteria were met by Argentina," the IMF said. "Substantial progress has been made in the implementation of the structural

reforms included in the programme."

This is a far cry from April, when the IMF rapped officials on the knuckles for not addressing surging current account and trade deficits and said a government labour market bill "falls well short of undertakings" in the loan deal.

Analysts said this is not just a matter of seeing the relative strengths of Argentina's economy. But at a time of endless questioning of the IMF role and with plenty of failed rescue plans behind it, the fund needs a shining success.

"Definitely, they (the IMF) need to point to a model," said Christopher Eccleston, head of research at the Inter-American brokerage. "The IMF is pretty unimpressive these days."

Marcelo Romano, an economist at the Lopez Leon brokerage, said the IMF praise of Argentina "was a case of Camdessus taking his best pupil and showing him off to

everybody."

He argued that in purely technical terms a case can be made for Argentina being the country that has survived the emerging market crisis most successfully. He pointed out that interest rates have remained lower than virtually everywhere else, bank deposits are rising consistently and foreign currency reserves have hardly budged from record levels.

But analysts suggested the fetting of Argentina is not just about the fund needing a success story, but it also appears to form part of IMF strategy to save Brazil from becoming the latest victim in the emerging market crisis.

"They (the IMF) need a model and to hit the Brazilians over the head with it," Eccleston said. It holds out hope to investors that Brazil, which in many ways is following a similar reformist trajectory to Argentina, can make it if it swallows the right pill.

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MR. WARREN LLOYD, former Canadian diplomat and vice office manager, National Vice President of the Canadian Organisation of Professional Immigration Consultants, will put his 30 years of experience inside and outside Canada's Immigration Department to work for you. Mr. Lloyd will host a free seminar for businesspersons and professionals wishing to establish residency in Canada. Mr. Lloyd represents BUSH FRANKEL WHITE (BFW), the most experienced law firm in Canada providing immigration services to some of the world's largest multinational corporations as well as business persons and professionals from some of the leading families in the Middle East. BFW offers over 100 years of experience to clients who want the very best.

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New rates and incentives for the coming season by Lufthansa

THE LUFTHANSA office in Amman Sunday held a workshop attended by several tourist and travel agents in Jordan. The German airline presented the audience with new fares as of Oct. 15, 1998 and information about new incentives to encourage travel on

Lufthansa airlines. The incentives include family fare and double mileage and the tickets validity.

Atallah Kiebeck, director of the Amman Lufthansa office, welcomed the audience expressing Lufthansa's appreciation for their efforts in sup-

porting Lufthansa during 1998 which he said secured a good share of the Jordanian market.

Kiebeck announced that a recently concluded agreement between Lufthansa and the U.S. United Airlines and the Jordan Civil Aviation Authority aims at facilitating travel.

The New CHOPARD Watches:

Black Diamonds collection — Square Happy Sport watch in 18 ct white gold set with 214 white diamonds, 32 black diamonds and 5 brilliant-cut diamonds, with 3 white and 4 black free-

moving diamonds. Happy Sport watch in 18 ct white gold set with 80 black diamonds, 67 white diamonds and 5 brilliant-cut diamonds, with 4 and 3 black free-moving diamonds.

It is known that Chopard has launched several new models of watches with and without diamonds. The Agent for Chopard in Jordan is Abu Shakra Trading Agency.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS

- Charles
- Formula math
- Amari's hometown
- Juicy fruits
- Ambrosia
- Ingredient
- Nocturnal noise-makers
- Night flyer
- Onassis to pals
- the season to be...
- "The Crying Game" star
- Wharton School deg.
- Sundial X
- Grey soldier, briefly
- Coral islet
- Can. province
- Double turn
- Nice one in France?
- Wynn and McMahon
- Flock younger
- Songwriters' grp.
- I haven't the vaguest
- Chicago tower
- Mimic
- of roses
- Pres. Lincoln
- Grave letters
- Poetic
- palindrome
- Chopping tool
- Scottish river
- Friend in France
- Cook bk. item
- SE Asian war
- Road-sign abbr.
- Ginnie
- Hill dweller?
- Good-natured
- Put in order
- Snuggler
- Illinois city
- Reindeer do?
- Military stances

DOWN

- MITER CAMP EBSB
- EROOE ODOOR LEIA
- DANNYTHOMASMAINN
- ANYA HAS TREADS
- LIB OIN STAIR
- EOEN GALS TOW
- BANAL SAOE ORNO
- MINNIEPEARLBUCK
- ODES SALT AIRES
- CAT LOTS SHEM
- THATS GAR ISH
- ALGOVE GAS ULNA
- LEEMARVINHAGLER
- WERE IPSO PLEAT
- ARPS CITE BIRDS
- Capable of following
- Tagger
- Host and hostess
- Effective things
- Ballroom dance from the Caribbean
- Builders
- Tropical fruit
- A critical study
- Clear of fog
- Chain of Inns
- Turkish inn
- Penetrate
- Ocean: abbr.
- Motorists' org.

By Marguerite Wells Jackson
Washington, D.C.

Peanuts

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Andy Capp

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Mutt'n'Jeff

PET MUTT COME SEE YOUR NEW NEIGHBOR!

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Herri Arnold and Mike Anglin

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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EEDDAC

TRUFUE

Answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: ADAPT DAISY CONCUR ERMINE
Answer: What she put her skin cream on — HER CREDIT CARD

Business

Are

CO

unfavour

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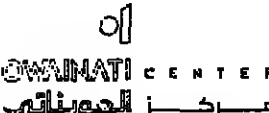
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German swimmers say doping easily masked

BONN (AFP) — Athletes can easily hide the fact they have been doping even when called upon to take drug tests, German swimmers Chris-Carol Bremer and Mark Warnecke said Sunday.

"You find testosterone and EPO in swimmers' pockets all over the world," said Bremer, third in the 200 metres butterfly in the 1994 world championships in Rome and a spokesman for the German swimming federation (DSV).

"It's no secret that you can easily get round doping controls," he told German television.

Bremer, a 27-year-old medicine student, explained the way to beat the testers was to take regular but small doses of performance-enhancing products which would allow the athlete to stay just inside the doping threshold.

Under internationally-accepted

guidelines, an athlete is guilty of testosterone doping when the testosterone-epitestosterone ratio, or TE value, rises above 6 to 1.

The TE value shows the level of male growth hormones in the bloodstream and Olympic 100m bronze medalist Warnecke said: "Those who have got it right can stay just under six (to one)."

"It's a bit like driving after a drink. You can say you've not had any, but everyone knows it's not true."

Bremer said that timing, as well as the regular dosage spread, was the key. "You can gulp down a pill at night and, in the morning, when the controller comes there's no trace of it. The only thing which gets noticed is when it goes wrong."

Warnecke agreed: "With the help of a good sports doctor you can spend the whole year on the stuff. If you do it

right you don't get done at a check."

Bremer and Warnecke said they were speaking out because they were worried about the effect of the trend on young competitors.

"I have noticed 13 to 14-year-old girls with unnaturally deep voices and acne," Warnecke told Berlin radio.

Earlier this month, German sports fans were shaken when three-time winner of the Berlin and Boston marathons Uta Pippig was suspended by the German Athletics Federation (DLV) after returning a positive drugs test.

Leipzig-born Pippig, 33 and who now lives in the United States, tested positive during a training session at Boulder, Colorado, on April 23, the federation said.

Petrovic sinks Bastia

PARIS (AFP) — Croatian midfielder Vladimir Petrovic scored a goal early in each half on Sunday as Toulouse clawed their way clear of the French league relegation zone with a 2-1 win over Bastia.

Petrovic put Toulouse ahead inside a minute with his head and then scored the 47th-minute winner with another header just 60 seconds after Franck Jurietti had lifted Bastia level with a free-kick that took a wicked deflection.

Monaco swept into title contention on Saturday by beating Montpellier 2-0 despite being without World Cup stars Thierry Henry and David Trezeguet, who picked up knocks in international action in midweek.

In the absence of their young strikers, Monaco, champions two seasons ago, turned to Croatian Robert Spehar for goals. He didn't disappoint, scoring twice in the first half to seal a victory which took Jean Tigana's men into third place behind Bordeaux and Marseille.

Monaco welcomed back French World Cup-winning goalkeeper Fabien Barthez, laid low for three weeks by a thigh injury, but he had quiet return against a Montpellier side who remain joint top scorers with Bordeaux, but who are a less potent force now that striker Ibrahim Bakayoko has joined Everton.

Defending champions Lens, looking for a morale-boosting win before Wednesday's European Champions League meeting with Panathinaikos, could only manage a 2-2 home draw with Auxerre after spurning a battery of good chances, Wagneau Eloi being the chief culprit.

Eloi scored both the home side's goals but a Stephane Carnot drive and Steve Marlet's header saved a point for Auxerre, who are seventh.

Eloi equalised Carnot's fifth-minute opener with a header from a cross by French international striker Tony Vairelles and then put them in front from close range on 26 minutes with the Auxerre defence in a muddle.

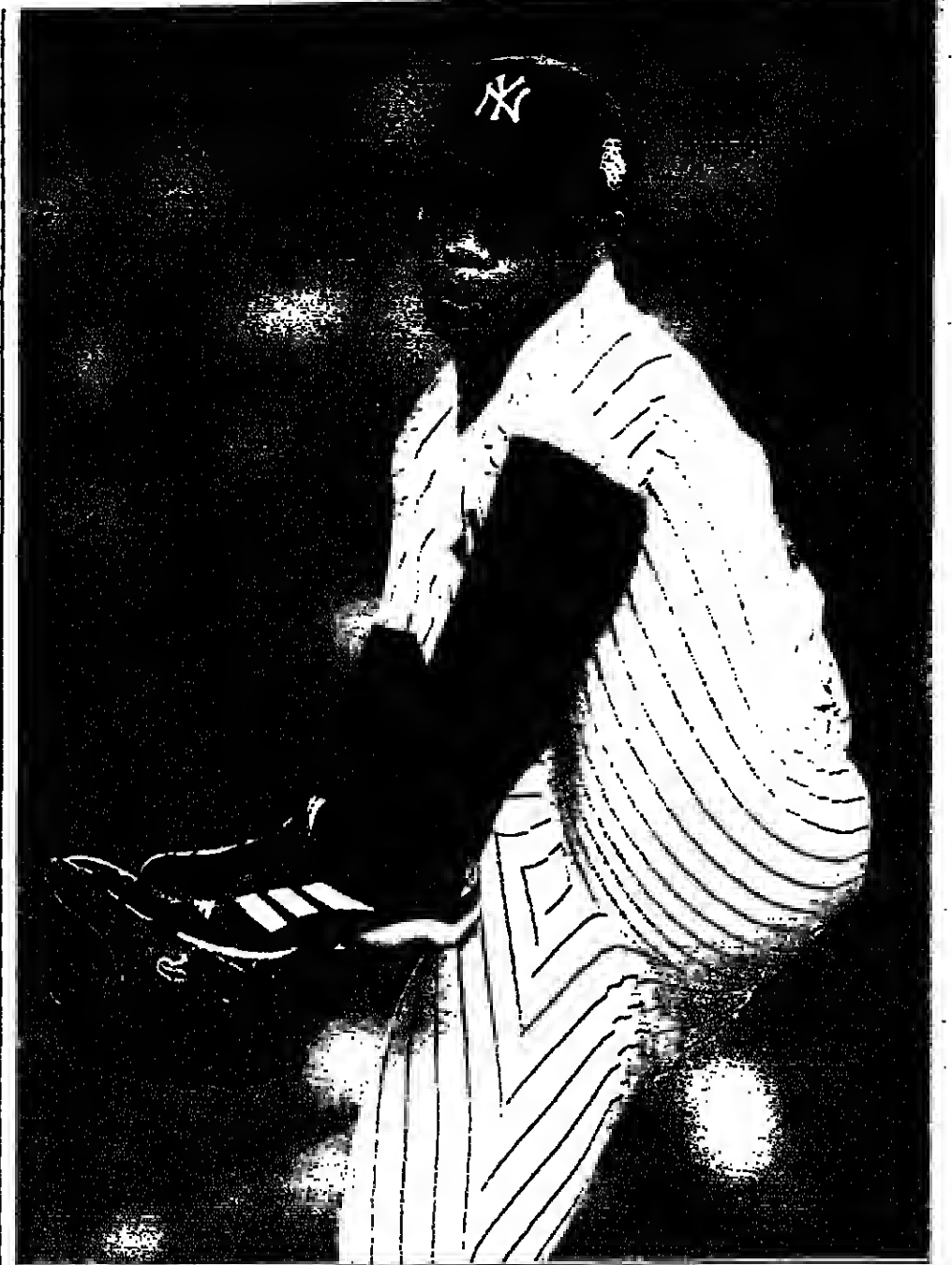
The Lens striker might easily have had a handful of goals but a header midway through the second half spun just wide of the near post and two meaty drives flashed yards off target.

With just two minutes left, Eloi headed inches over from six yards out.

Bordeaux still lead the table from Marseille by a single point after both front-runners enjoyed comprehensive victories on Friday.

Bordeaux saw off Nantes 2-0 with first-half goals from Johan Micoud and Kaha Diawara, while former European champions Marseille won by the same score at Strasbourg, Florian Maurice scoring a double to maintain Marseille's status as the league's only unbeaten side.

Artur Jorge had to settle for a draw on Friday on his return for a second spell in charge of Paris St Germain, a Marco Simone goal securing a point at high-flying Lyon.



New York Yankees Orlando Hernandez delivers a pitch during the first inning of Game 2 of the World Series at Yankee Stadium. The Yankees won the first game 9-6. Hernandez, a star player in Cuba, fled his native land 10 months ago and now starts the second game of Major League Baseball's World Series (Reuters photo).

Yankees pound Padres to grab control of World Series

NEW YORK (AFP) — The New York Yankees seized command of the 94th World Series here Sunday, pounding San Diego 9-3 behind a 16-hit barrage and the bewitching pitching of Cuban defector Orlando Hernandez.

Puerto Ricans Bernie Williams and Jorge Posada each blasted two-run homers for the Yankees while right-hander Hernandez, banned from Cuba's national team a year ago, was stunning in his World Series debut.

"El Duque" allowed only one run on six hits in seven innings, striking out seven batters while walking three.

Hernandez defected last December after a 129-47 career for Cuba's national team. He had been banned from the squad for 14 months because of Cuban officials' fears he might defect.

New York grabbed a 2-0 lead in Major League Baseball's best-of-seven final, which continues Tuesday in San Diego with 20-game winner David Wells pitching for the Yankees against southpaw Sterling Hitchcock.

Teams with 2-0 leads have won the Series 75 percent of the time. Home teams winning the first two Series games have won the championship in 22 of 29 cases, last failing in 1981 when the Yankees lost to Los Angeles.

The Yankees pulled away in the first three innings by blasting San Diego starting pitcher Andy Ashby for seven runs on 10 hits, aided by a walk, two stolen bases and a San Diego error.

Williams smacked a three-ball, two-strike pitch into the centerfield stands for a two-out homer in the second inning that gave the Yankees a 6-0 lead. Derek Jeter preceded him with a run-scoring single.

Ricky Ledee's two-out

double to left field in the third inning scored Tino Martinez from third base, stretching the Yankees' lead to 7-0 and finally convincing the Padres to pull Ashby. His replacement, ex-Yankee Brian Boehringer, fared no better, lasting only 1 2/3 innings and surrendering a two-run homer to catcher Posada, who put the Yankees ahead 9-1 after five innings.

The Yankees seek their 24th title, and second in three years, in their 35th World Series appearance after an American League record 114-win season.

In New York's three-run first inning, leadoff batter Chuck Knoblauch walked, stole second base and scored when Padres' third baseman Ken Caminiti threw over the head of first baseman Wally Joyner.

Paul O'Neill reached first on the play and took second

on a Williams ground out. He scored on a single Chili Davis, who scored subsequent singles.

Martinez and Scott Brosius to put New York up 3-0. While Padre pitchers were pummeled, Hernandez showed the form that made him a star in Cuba by tormenting batters with throws from numerous angles, mixing speeds and spins with masterful control.

"El Duque" was 12-4 this season with a 3.13 earned run average. He is the half brother of Liván Hernandez, who was the Most Valuable Player in last year's World Series for the champion Florida Marlins.

San Diego scored in the fifth inning on an RBI double by Dominican second baseman Quiroga Velez, in the eighth when Padres' Ruben Rivera hit a run-scoring double and Chris Gomez drove him in with a single.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNIAH HERRICH
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THAT ELUSIVE EXTRA CHANCE

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 8 4
♥ A K
♦ 10 8 7 6 5 3
♣ K

WEST
♠ 8 3
♥ J 8 8 7 2
♦ K J 3
♣ 10 8 8

EAST
♠ 7 6 2
♥ Q 10 8 5 3
♦ Q
♣ 7 6 4 3 2

SOUTH
♠ K Q 10 5
♥ 8 4
♦ A 8 4
♣ A Q J 5

The bidding:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♠ Pass 2♠ Pass
3♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
4♠ Pass 4♠ Pass
5♠ Pass 5♠ Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠

Some extra chances are easy to spot. Others are camouflaged and have to be uncovered. When North showed sound values and four-card spade support, by jumping to four spades on the third round of the auction, South's hand merited a slam try, and five diamonds was the obvious move. North accepted by cue-bidding hearts, and South was off to the races.

West led a club, taken in dummy. Trumps were drawn in three rounds, ending in hand. How should declarer proceed?

The problem is to avoid losing two diamond tricks, and the obvious way is to cash the ace of diamonds and continue the suit, hoping for an even break. But that is against the odds and would result in a one-trick set here.

The better line is not easy to unearth. After drawing trumps, South should clear clubs and hearts from the two hands, discarding three diamonds from dummy, then exit with a diamond and duck in hand when East produces the queen. Since West cannot profitably overtake with the king, East is now employed and must yield a ruff-suit for the fulfilling trick. The same endplay applies if West has singleton diamond honor.

The only problem comes if East wins a low diamond after West underplays the jack. Now declarer must guess whether to finesse or play for a 3-2 split. Since, a priori, the odds favor a 3-1 split, we would opt for finessing the nine.

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Super Lazio keep Fiorentina on top

MILAN (AFP) — Inter Milan's hopes of overtaking Fiorentina at the top of the Italian league lay in ruins on Sunday night, after they were sensationally beaten 5-3 by Lazio here.

Lazio scored in the second minute and were 3-1 up at the break after goals from Chilean Marcelo Salas, Brazilian Sergio Conceicao and Roberto Mancini, before accelerating into a 5-1 lead midway through the second half.

Conceicao's second and another from Czech Pavel Nedved were followed by a brace by 20-year-old Inter substitute Nicola Ventola — but it was all too little and far too late for the San Siro crowd.

Inter were without Ronaldo and Roberto Baggio, who are both recovering from knee injuries, but their biggest regret was having Argentinian midfielder Diego Simeone sent off in first-half injury time.

Lazio coach Sven Goran Eriksson said: "We were hoping to have a really good game, but I would never have dreamed we could come here and score five goals against Inter Milan at San Siro."

"We fully deserved to win — the team were excellent both up front and at the back. Now we know what this team is capable of doing."

Inter's Gigi Simoni took defeat on the chin, saying: "We lost, and now we are going to have analyse where we went wrong. We have never made mistakes like that before at the back and we mustn't make them again."

Inter's first defeat of the season left them level on 10 points with AS Roma and

champions Juventus, and two points behind Fiorentina.

On a bad day for the top clubs, Juventus had a man sent off in a 1-1 draw with lowly Vicenza and AC Milan were beaten 1-0 at Cagliari.

Vicenza's Lamberto Zauli, who is getting married on Monday, was celebrating early after a 40th-minute strike — only for his effort to be cancelled out by Alessandro Del Piero in first-half injury time.

Zinedine Zidane chipped the ball over from the left, Filippo Inzaghi headed it back at the far post and Del Piero's right boot got there a split-second before the hands of the Vicenza goalkeeper.

Despite Del Piero's first goal of the season, the champions had defender Alessandro Birindelli sent off for a second bookable offence in the 68th minute and had to hang on for their point.

Coach Marcello Lippi insisted: "We're getting better, we had a good game."

"We did a few stupid things in the first half, we made some bad passes and got a few moves wrong with the free-kicks. But we showed authority in the second half and if we hadn't been a man down I think we could have won it."

"We're going to play Athletic Bilbao on Wednesday and I think the team showed today that we can get a good result there."

AC Milan couldn't even manage a point from their game in Sardinia.

They were trailing after 19 minutes to a goal by Tiziano De Paoli, after Milan's French defender Bruno N'Gotty headed the ball



Inter Milan Coach Gigi Simoni leaves the field looking dejected after Inter Milan crashed to one of their heaviest home defeats in serie A with a 5-3 thrashing by championship rivals Lazio (Reuters photo).

straight to the Cagliari midfielder's feet. And they would have been 2-0 down soon after, were it not for quick work by coach Alberto Zaccheroni.

Goalkeeper Jens Lehmann tripped Roberto Muzzi as the Cagliari striker burst into the area and Zaccheroni took the German off and sent Sebastiano Rossi between the posts to face the spot-kick.

Rossi saved, but there was more penalty agony before the break when Milan's German striker Oliver Bierhoff missed one at the other end.

Zaccheroni said: "It wasn't the best of Milan out there today. We tried to put the ball forward more than we did against Venezia but there wasn't the slightest bit of self-belief."

"And if you've not got the determination, you can lose anywhere. Cagliari deserved

to win because they had that extra bit of conviction."

As for sending on Rossi to face a penalty, he said: "I asked him if he felt up to it and he said 'no problem.' And knowing his character, I can't say I was certain he would save it ... but I was pretty sure."

The first goal of the day was scored by the oldest man in Italian football, Pietro Vierchowod, who turns 40 in April and who gave Piacenza a third minute lead against Sampdoria in a 4-1 win.

Vierchowod did not see the victory through, after being stretchered off after a 20th-minute collision with Sampdoria's Francesco Palmieri and finishing up in hospital for tests. He was later released with a bruised hip.

Elsewhere, Perugia beat Venezia 1-0 and there was a 1-1 draw for Udinese at Bari.



The Williams sisters won 5-7 6-1 6-3 (Reuters photo).

Williams sisters triumph: Venus Williams (R) and her sister Serena (L) celebrate their victory in the doubles final against Mariaan de Swardt of South Africa and Elena Tatarkova of the Ukraine at the European indoor championships in Kloten.

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Premier League teams begin 12th round

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Leaders Al Faisali will try to stop Al Ahli's recent winning streak when they meet in the 12th round of the Premier League Championship.

Al Ahli have moved from bottom place to 7th this week after a 1-0 win over Al Jazireh, while Al Faisali still top the standings for the second week running after a 1-0 win over Irbid hopefuls Al Hussein.

Tideholders Al Wihdat, who last beat Shabab Al Hussein 4-0, will play Kufroum Tuesday. The Shield champs are now bottom of the table after losing 3-2 Al Ahli and 2-0 to Al Qadissieh in their last two matches.

Eighth-placed Al Jazireh who lost to Al Ahli 1-0, play Al Qadissieh with both teams hoping to move away from the relegation threatened last two.

Ninth-placed Al Arabi meet Shabab Al Hussein who have managed to stay in fifth place despite their loss to Al Wihdat.

Al Arabi last beat Al Ramtha 1-0 and will be hoping to continue on the same track to avoid relegation.

The week's most awaited match is the clash of northern rivals Al Hussein and Al Ramtha who are battling for third and fourth places.

The top ten teams are playing two matches a week to end the fourth and last of the season's soccer competitions on Nov. 20.

Al Wihdat are looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title after winning the season-opening fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

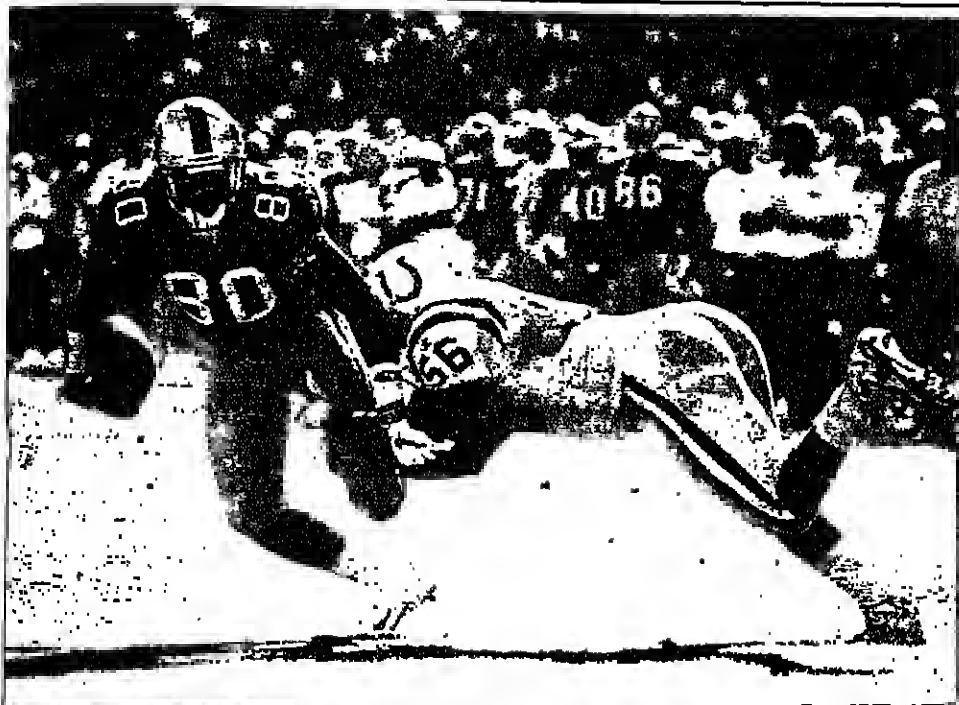
Al Faisali took the second of the season's four soccer championships when they won their record 10th Jordan Cup.

Kufroum, playing in the prestigious league for the third year running, made history when they clinched their first ever major title by beating Al Hussein to win the country's third title — the Jordan Football Association (JFA) Shield.

Al Wihdat, who have won the Cup and Cup Winners Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Faisali	11	10	-	1	30	5	30
Wihdat	11	9	1	1	28	10	28
Hussein	11	5	1	5	10	8	16
Ramtha	11	4	3	4	13	15	15
Al Hussein	11	3	5	3	12	16	14
Qadissieh	11	3	4	4	16	18	13
Ahli	11	2	3	6	8	13	9
Jazireh	11	2	3	6	7	15	9
Arabi	11	2	3	6	13	24	9
Kufroum	11	1	5	5	8	21	8



San Francisco 49ers wide receiver Jerry Rice (80) is hit by Indianapolis Colts Andre Royal (56) after taking an eight-yard pass from 49ers quarterback Steve Young in the second quarter of their game. Rice tied Art Monk's record of most consecutive games with at least one catch at 183 games (Reuters photo)

NFL RESULTS

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Results and Standings in the National Football League on Sunday:

Atlanta	31	New Orleans	23
Buffalo	17	Jacksonville	16
Minnesota	41	Washington	7
NY Giants	34	Arizona	7
Pittsburgh	16	Baltimore	6
Tampa Bay	16	Carolina	13
Tennessee	44	Cincinnati	14
San Francisco	34	Indianapolis	31
Chicago	13	Dallas	12
Miami	14	St. Louis	0
San Diego	13	Philadelphia	10

Robson signs 5-year deal at Middlesbrough

MIDDLESBROUGH (AFP) — Bryan Robson on Monday ended speculation that he could be the man to replace Glenn Hoddle as the next England coach by signing a new five-year contract at Middlesbrough.

The former England captain will stay at the English Premiership club until the summer of 2003.

"The chairman Steve Gibson has been different class ever since I came to the club," said Robson.

"He has done everything he ever promised. In fact everyone here wants to succeed."

"We have a fantastic stadium, a world-class training ground and a great squad of players."

Robson left Manchester United in the summer of 1994 to take over at Middlesbrough and has

twice led the club to promotion from Division One as well as to three domestic cup finals.

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German appointed new Iranian coach

BONN (AFP) — Former Bundesliga star Hans-Jürgen 'Zico' Gede has been made temporary coach of the Iranian national side.

Gede, who was the Iranian Olympic coach from 1993-1995, takes over from Jalal Talebi.

Gede's contract only runs until the end of the Asian Games which finish in Bangkok on December 20.

A decision about his future will be made after the Games by the Iranian football authorities.

Gede used to play for Schalke 04 between 1975-1977.

Asian League Champions Handball Tournament starts today

By Roufan Nahhas

Schedule

AMMAN — The 1st Asian League Champions Handball Tournament kicks off Tuesday with only five teams taking part in the Oct. 20-27 event.

Seven teams had initially registered for the event but two teams later declined.

"We had to repeat the draw because China's Army team and Al Shareeqa of the United Arab Emirates declined," Championship Director and Jordan Handball Federation (JHF) Secretary Sinan Al Hussein told the Jordan Times.

He said the federation repeated the draw since "Asian Handball Federation rules stipulate that teams play one round instead of being divided into two groups when the number of participating teams is less than eight."

Jordan's Al Salt and Al Ahli, Iran's Zobohan Asfahan, Qatar's Al Rayyan and Kuwait's Kathema will be vying for the title.

Jordan's Al Ahli have a tough match against Al Rayyan in the tournament's opening match.

"We hope that Al Ahli will give in their best since they have been practising and concentrating on the weak

Ahli vs. Al Rayyan
Salt vs. Zobohan
Salt vs. Kathema
Ahli vs. Zobohan
Rayyan vs. Zobohan
Ahli vs. Kathema
Salt vs. Ahli
Rayyan vs. Kathema
Zobohan vs. Kathema
Salt vs. Rayyan

Tues. Oct. 20 4:30 p.m.
Wed. Oct. 21 4:00 p.m.
Thurs. Oct. 22 4:00 p.m.
Thurs. Oct. 22 6:15 p.m.
Sat. Oct. 24 4:00 p.m.
Sat. Oct. 24 6:15 p.m.
Sun. Oct. 25 4:00 p.m.
Sun. Oct. 25 6:15 p.m.
Tues. Oct. 27 4:00 p.m.
Tues. Oct. 27 6:15 p.m.

points," the JHF official said.

Jordan's Al Salt will play Iran's Zobohan on Wednesday.

Al Salt's coach Mohammed Hamzeh said his squad had recruited two players from the national team as he "expected a rough time playing against the Iranians."

"We are ready for competition as we had extensive training. Although a couple of teams have some professional players we are already for any team," added Al Salt's coach who trained the Iraqi national team for three years.

He cited Al Rayyan who have two Egyptian professional players in their squad.

Meanwhile, Al Rayyan overcame Al Yarmouk University team in a friendly match Sunday 43-28 (18-14).

The Asian tournament precedes the 20th Arab Clubs League Championship Nov. 4-14 in which Jordan's top two teams will also be taking part.

"This event will also be a test for the players who will form the new national team for the next year's Pan-Arab Games," Al Hussein said.

The handball federation recently declined participation in the upcoming Asian Games in Bangkok after the national team's latest results.

"The disappointing results of our national team in the recently-concluded 1st Arab Cup Championship in Cairo gave us a clear idea that we need to know more about our weaknesses," he said. "This event will sure give us the answers we need" he added.

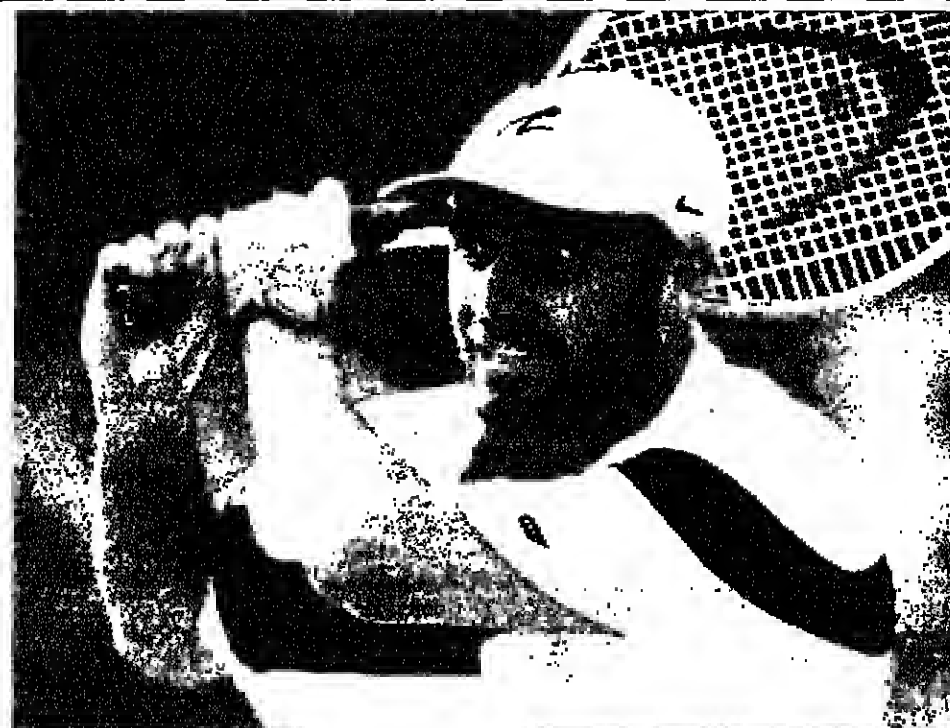
Sampras, Agassi, in Kooyong Classic

MELBOURNE (AFP) — World No. 1 Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi and Goran Ivanisevic head the entries announced Monday for the Kooyong Tennis Classic here in January.

Sampras, fighting a battle against Australian Patrick Rafter and Chilean Marcelo Rios for the year-end No. 1 ranking, will use the January 13-16 event to fine-tune for the Australian Open Grand Slam starting a week later.

Organisers have also confirmed Australia's U.S. Open finalist Mark Philippoussis, Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Swede Thomas Enqvist will play in the eight-man event on the Rebound Ace surface, the same used for the Australian Open.

Two more spots remained to be filled.



Andre Agassi

Faithful Son favourite for Melbourne Cup

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian bookmakers on Monday elevated the Godolphin-trained Faithful Son from England to 6-1 favourite ahead of local horse Tie The Knot for the A\$2.8 million (\$1.68 million) Melbourne Cup on November 3.

Tie The Knot, third in Saturday's Caulfield Cup at Randwick won by another English import, Taufan's Melody, was 8-1.

Faithful Son put in the fastest last 400m in the Caulfield Cup after being cramped on the turn to finish fourth. He had needed to finish in the first five to qualify for the Melbourne Cup.

His trainer, Saeed Bin Suroor, said: "We're pretty excited about his chances in the Melbourne

Cup after his performance on Saturday. He had no luck and to finish the race off as he did was very encouraging."

Damien Oliver has replaced Ray Cochrane on Taufan's Melody in the Melbourne Cup after Cochrane was disqualified for his ride on the Caulfield Cup winner.

Taufan's Melody, trained by Lady Anne Herries, wife of former English cricketer Colin Cowdrey, will attempt to become the first foreigner to claim the double when he contests the Melbourne Cup following his upset Caulfield Cup victory.

Herries was unconcerned about a 2.5kg penalty imposed on her eight-year-old gelding. Cochrane was suspended for a month for causing interference in the final stages of Saturday's race.

He has had three attempts to win

Australia's most famous race.

Racing Victoria general manager Les Benton said Monday: "I can confirm that Damien Oliver has been offered the ride."

Oliver rode Faithful Son to fourth in the Caulfield Cup and will be replaced by Frankie Dettori in the Melbourne Cup.

Dettori will be keen to break his Melbourne Cup hoodoo.

He has had three attempts to win

Australia's most famous race.

Dettori was ninth on Drum Taps in 1993, 10th on Bullwinkle in 1995 and sixth on Arabian Story last year.

Tie The Knot jockey Shane Dye said they needed the Caulfield Cup to get into shape for the Melbourne Cup.

"He needed the run, but it will top him off perfectly for the Melbourne Cup," said Dye.

"But the English horses are going to be hard to beat. Taufan's Melody is

a third rate English horse and he still won our Caulfield Cup," he said.

"Sure, we needed more pace on, but I was going to win 100 metres from home then Tie The Knot's condition gave out."

"I think he deserves to be up there with Europe's best chances."

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Grenades injure dozens at Israeli bus station

BEERSHEBA (AP) — A Palestinian man hurled two hand grenades at a crowded Israeli bus station Monday morning, injuring at least 64 people during a critical point in a Mideast peace summit in Maryland.

Two victims were in serious condition after the rush hour assault in the desert town of Beersheba, 83 kilometres south of Jerusalem, and many soldiers were among the wounded.

After the 8 a.m. (0600 GMT) blasts, army-issue olive druff bags and clothes were seen strewn on the pavement near a glass-covered bus stop. A soldier's polished black boots, with the socks stuffed inside, were left behind on a traffic island.

Witnesses said the alleged assailant was wrestled to the ground by a soldier and taken into custody. A bus driver told Israel Radio he ran down the suspect and overpowered him. In the immediate confusion, several Palestinians apparently were chased by passers-by believing they were involved in the attack.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in response to the blasts that he would not seal an agreement on a West Bank troop pullback unless the Palestinians meet their security obligations and do more to prevent terror attacks.

"It is up to the Palestinian Authority to fight terror in both word and deed," he said in a statement.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) said the attack harms the Palestinians because it gives Israeli hard-liners an excuse to try to hold up a troop withdrawal. The statement, issued by Tayeb Abdul Rabim, secretary gen-

eral of the PNA, did not condemn the attack outright.

Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, founder of the Islamist group Hamas, stopped short of claiming responsibility, saying only that "what happened this morning is part of our continued resistance to the occupation of our land."

Hamas has threatened to carry out attacks in Israel to avenge the killing of two fugitives by Israeli soldiers last month.

Monday's explosions went off during morning rush hour at the central bus station in Beersheba, which — like most Israeli bus stations — is an outdoor station.

Bibi Sasson, an Israeli taxi driver, said he saw a young Palestinian carrying a white bag walking toward the stop of the No. 14 bus which takes soldiers to a nearby army base.

Sasson said he then heard a blast. The Palestinian began to run, was chased by a soldier, threw another grenade and was then overpowered, Sasson said.

The force of the explosions pushed several soldiers to the ground and blew out windows in nearby restaurants and shops. A street sweeper, who had lost consciousness, lay on the pavement, his body covered by blood, said restaurant owner Ezra Zion.

Police told Israel Radio they believed the suspect, who is from the West Bank town of Dahariya, wanted to harm the soldiers. The radio said one grenade had hit a bus full of passengers, but exploded some distance away.

Officials at Sorokka Hospital in Beersheba said 64 people were injured, including two who were in serious condition. Most suffered



Israeli policeman inspects the site after an attack by a Palestinian in the central bus station in the Israeli southern town of Beersheba on Monday (AFP photo)

minor injuries.

At the Mideast summit, the key issue is Israel's demand that the Palestinians do more to prevent terror attacks in Israel.

Netanyahu has said he will not hand over West Bank land until he receives ironclad guarantees from Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Dahariya, the hometown of the assailant, is in a part of the West Bank where Israel retains full security control, while Palestinian police deal with maintaining order.

Israeli hard-liners demanded that Netanyahu break off the negotiations, but Netanyahu spokesman Aviv Bushinsky said Israel would

not leave prematurely.

In another incident Sunday evening, shots were fired at a van filled with Palestinian labourers and three passengers were wounded. The driver of the van said Israeli troops opened fire after the vehicle skirted a West Bank roadblock. The army said soldiers were not involved.

Regent receives delegation from Um Al Fahm

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received at the Royal Court Monday a delegation representing the Arab city of Um Al Fahm in Israel, who arrived in Amman to brief the Regent on the latest developments in their city resulting from Israel's decision to confiscate their lands.

The delegation thanked Prince Hassan for Jordan's support of their cause.

The citizens of Um Al Fahm clashed with the Israeli police over the seizure by Israel of their lands earlier this month. According to news reports the Israeli army confiscated thousands of hectares of Arab lands since 1948 leaving the local residents of Um Al Fahm with only a fraction of their original lands around the town.

In remarks at the meeting, which was attended by Chief of the Royal Court Jawad Anani, the Regent reiterated Jordan's firm stand of rejecting the policy of land confiscation and emphasising the need for respect of all parties' rights regardless of religious, ethnic or racial backgrounds.

The Regent stressed the need for the Arab residents to arm themselves with information based on studies and facts as well as accurate data to help them defend their rights.

He said the Arab citizens should emphasise the humanitarian dimension when highlighting Israel's decision to confiscate Arab land in Um

Al Fahm.

The Crown Prince reassured Jordan's solid stand in support of the Arab citizens and the Kingdom's keenness to keep bridges of cooperation and contacts open with Arab citizens in Israel and to provide them with all possible assistance.

The delegation led by Mayor Raed Salah Suleiman briefed the Regent on the Israeli decision to confiscate the land to build Jewish settlements.

He said Israel decided to prevent Um Al Fahm residents from entering their confiscated lands, prompting them to protest the move through demonstrations after all contacts with the Israeli government had failed.

Suleiman said Israel's confiscations of Arab lands over the past years have reduced Um Al Fahm's lands from 120,000 dunums to 23,000.

The delegation presented to Prince Hassan maps and other data which shed more light on the Israeli move and its negative impacts on Um Al Fahm.

They also presented Prince Hassan with a letter from the Popular Committee in Defence of the Arab Land in the Um Al Fahm region calling for Jordan's interference to cancel the Israeli military confiscations of their land, particularly the lands around Al Roha district.

Prince Hassan told the delegation that Jordan will do all that in its power to provide the required assistance.

'Iran-Taleban tensions ease'

ISLAMABAD (R) — A senior United Nations envoy said on Monday that tensions between Iran and Afghanistan's ruling Taleban militia had eased, and added he would return to Tehran on Tuesday with a proposal for direct talks between the two sides.

U.N. special envoy on Afghanistan Lakhdar Brahimi told a news conference he also planned to visit neighbouring Central Asian states to pursue his long-term mission for peace in war-torn Afghanistan.

Asked if his immediate mission to ease Iran-Taleban tensions had succeeded, he said: "Insha-Allah [God willing] it has," adding that the recent release of Iranian prisoners by the Taleban "must make a difference."

Iran has said that it has as many as 270,000 troops on its border with Afghanistan. One of Tehran's key demands for reducing tension was the release of a number of Iranians held by the Taleban.

Brahimi said that with Saturday's release of 26 men, the Taleban had released all known Iranian prisoners in its custody, "so this part of the job is behind us."

"But there is no peace in Afghanistan," he said.

Brahimi cited the latest fighting between the Taleban and its opponents for the northeastern town of Taloqan, which he said had reportedly changed hands twice during

the previous 24 hours.

"There is still a lot to be done to bring peace to Afghanistan," he said.

He said he would convey the Taleban's demand that Iran and Afghan opposition factions release Taleban prisoners. Tehran denies it has any such prisoners.

Brahimi, a former Algerian foreign minister, said the Taleban had agreed to his proposal for direct talks with Iran.

"We are taking this proposal to Iran. We will see what is their response," he said. He arrived in Islamabad on Oct. 8 after four days of talks in Tehran amid the tense Iran-Taleban military standoff.

Tension between the Taleban and Iran flared in August after 10 Iranian diplomats and a journalist were killed when Taleban forces captured the northern Afghan town of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Dozens of other Iranians, including the 26 freed on Saturday, were arrested at the same time.

The militia, which controls 95 per cent of Afghanistan, says the Iranian diplomats and journalist were killed by renegade fighters acting without orders. It has promised to punish the perpetrators.

Brahimi said he would ask the United Nations to set in motion the process for an inquiry into allegations of systematic killings of Afghans and others in Mazar-e-Sharif in August and last year.

Dubai to reward safe drivers with cash

DUBAI (AP) — For one week this month, this oil-rich emirate will be using a carrot instead of a stick to convince car drivers to be on their best behaviour.

During a week-long campaign starting Saturday, traffic police will cite 12 motorists a day for following safe driving rules, radio and press reports said Monday.

The safe drivers — or RoadStars — will share a total of 100,000 dirhams (\$27,400) in prize money, the report said.

During the campaign, police will be on the lookout for drivers who wear seat belts, drive within

speed limits, use their turn signals and display courteous behaviour, the Gulf News reported.

Police will relay a description of a safely driven car and its licence plate number to a local radio station, Dubai FM.

Motorists who hear the broadcast can pull over to collect their awards, the newspaper said.

In addition to the cash, the RoadStars will get a certificate of appreciation from the Dubai police station, the paper said.

Traffic accidents are the number one cause of death in this country of 2.4 million.

More than 4,400 leave Kuwait under amnesty for overstayers

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — More than 4,400 foreigners left Kuwait during a one-month amnesty for overstayers that expired last week, a security official said.

Major General Ahmad Al Rujaib, assistant undersecretary for security services, said 15,872 people legalised their stay, while 4,458 opted to leave the oil-rich Gulf state, Arab Times newspaper reported on Monday.

The one-month amnesty

granted by the interior ministry allowed expatriates with no valid residence permits, mostly Asians and Iranians, to legalise their stay or leave Kuwait without being jailed or fined.

Rujaib added that expatriates who did not take advantage of the grace period could still legalise their stay on payment of their overstay fines.

But the interior ministry rounded up 300 illegals on Saturday and warned that a

crackdown would continue in areas where illegal expatriates are suspected of being concentrated.

In 1997, some 22,000 workers took advantage of a similar scheme, with just under half leaving Kuwait and some 12,000 huying new residency permits and remaining in the country.

Kuwait has a population of 2.2 million, of which only 759,000 (34 per cent) hold citizenship.

Kuwaiti fiance detained for AIDS after premarital test

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Police detained a young Kuwaiti after a routine premarital medical check-up found he was suffering from AIDS, a newspaper said Monday.

Staff at Kuwait's Infectious Diseases Hospital notified the authorities and the unidentified man was picked up and quizzed on his sexual history, Al Seyassah said.

He admitted to having had two previous sexual partners, one of whom was an expatriate woman who charged him for

sex, and the other a woman he had sex with on several occasions.

The police are now searching for the second woman in case she has contracted the virus, the paper said.

Abdul Aziz Al Enezi, the hospital's director, said it was currently treating 60 Kuwaiti men and women suffering from the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Enezi added that some 1,000 expatriates found to be suffering from AIDS had been

deported since the early 1980s, while locals have to undergo hospital treatment.

Foreign workers are obliged on arrival in Kuwait, as in other Gulf Arab states, to undergo a series of medical tests for a wide range of diseases before they can obtain a residence visa.

Kuwait's government also encourages young couples to undergo medical checks, mainly for genetic disorders, before marriage.

U.N. says oil plan not helping Iraq food situation

BAGHDAD (R) — The U.N. oil-for-food programme has done little to improve the food situation for Iraqis and agriculture remains crippled, a U.N. official said on Monday.

"The memorandum of understanding has done little to better the [food] situation in Iraq," said Amir Abdullah Khalil, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) representative in Iraq.

Khalil said a lack of fertilisers, agricultural machinery and seeds prevented Iraq from growing the food it needed.

"In spite of the implementation of the memorandum

of understanding since 1996, malnutrition has remained a serious problem throughout the whole country," he added.

Khalil, quoting a recent survey by U.N. agencies working in Iraq, said malnutrition and lack of medicines had shown the death toll among children under five was around 5,000 a month.

A survey conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and released in June said 22.8 per cent of children were born underweight compared with 9.2 per cent in August 1991, just a year after trade sanctions were imposed.

The sanctions were introduced when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 and remained in force after it was driven out in 1991.

The United Nations has allowed Iraq to sell limited quantities of its oil since December 1996 to buy food and medicines to offset impact of sanctions on Iraqis.

The first three phases of the oil plan allocated \$72 million to improve the agricultural sector. Khalil said only 20 per cent of the allocated money in the third phase had been materialised.

The fourth, expanded, phase of the programme which began in June allocated \$192 million for agricul-

ture. The U.N. official said that amount would be reduced as falling oil prices meant Iraq would be unable to meet a target of \$5.25 billion of oil exports over six months allowed by the United Nations.

Iraq imported 70 per cent of its food needs before 1990.

Under sanctions it launched a big drive for self-sufficiency.

Khalil said agriculture was "deteriorating due to the spread of pests such as sun-pest, dubs, humaira and red spider mite as well as the spread of animal diseases."

A recent FAO report said Iraqi wheat production had

decreased to 1.06 million tonnes in 1997 from 1.24 million tonnes in 1995.

Rice production declined from 244,000 tonnes last year from 315,000 tonnes in 1995, it said.

The report said Iraq had suffered a sharp decrease in the number of livestock over the past few years of sanctions. The total number of animals fell from 15 million in 1990 to nine million in 1997, it said.

The FAO also said that Baghdad lacked weed-killers and its fleet of 28 helicopters for spraying insecticides was grounded at a vital time by lack of spare parts.



Diana's funeral service chairs for sale

LONDON (AP) — Chairs that held the guests at Princess Diana's funeral service are being sold for \$5,100 each, The Sunday Times reported. Westminster Abbey, which used the beech and elm chairs until March, decided to sell them to help defray the cost of new chairs. Pew Corner, a furniture company located in Surrey, southwest of London, bought all 800 and now plans to market the chairs to buyers in the United States, the newspaper said.

Brandenburg Gate's damage is real

BERLIN (AP) — It was only for a movie, but the damage to Berlin's historic Brandenburg Gate was real, if minor. A film crew was shooting a scene early Saturday morning where a car was supposed to zip through the city's most famous landmark. The car sprang from a track, however, and rammed one of the gate's pillars, breaking off a roughly 30 by 40 centimetre chunk of stone. Police called the damage light and said the arch's structural integrity was not compromised. The gate was built under 18th-century Prussian rulers in the heart of Berlin, and was part of the Berlin Wall until 1989.

Deborah Harry still feels cross

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Deborah Harry is still peeved that during her heyday critics never gave her voice any respect. Instead, they focused on her brash image, Harry says in Sunday's Los Angeles Times. "I don't think I was ever reviewed as a singer until a few years ago," said Harry, 53. "The focus was on my attitude. People would ask 'Why would a woman who could survive on her looks do that?' It was like I was making a political statement."

'It started with a girl named Alice'

BURBANK (AP) — Before there was Mickey Mouse, there was Alice. Virginia Davis, who starred in early "Alice" cartoons by Walt Disney, was honoured on Friday at a ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of Disney studios. "Walt said it all started with a mouse, but that wasn't quite true. It started with a girl named Alice," said Roy E. Disney, vice chairman of the Walt Disney Co. "It's about time, isn't it?" said Davis, 79, who was four years old in 1923 when Walt Disney turned out a series of cartoons that combined live action with animation.

Pearson sells Madame Tussaud's personalities

LONDON (AFP) — Madame Tussaud's, the London museum of wax models of famous people, has been sold by Pearson media as part of a package worth \$598 million, Pearson said on Monday. The museum, which is one of the biggest tourist attractions in Britain, has been acquired by the British investment group Charterhouse Development Capital. The business was sold with the rest of Pearson's entertainment subsidiary Tussauds Group, including two British amusement parks and an Amsterdam wax-works museum.